

Paix et Peu.



G. Kne Hel. Figures peux.

R. White sculp.

Monsieur De S. Evremont

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THE
WORKS
OF MONSIEUR
DE
ST. EVREMOND,

Made English from the French Original :

WITH THE
LIFE OF THE AUTHOR;

BY
MR. DES MAIZEAUX, F. R. S.

To which are added

The Memoirs of the Dutcheſs of Mazarin, &c

The Second Edition, corrected and enlarged.

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A CON-



A
CONVERSATION
BETWEEN
M. DE ST. EVREMOND
AND THE
DUKE OF CANDALE.

I DO not pretend to entertain the Publick with my own Affairs. The World has no concern to know the misfortunes and accidents that have befallen me ; but no man that is not in the spleen can take it ill, if I make some Reflections upon my past Life, and divert my mind from melancholy thoughts, to those that are not altogether so disagreeable. However, as it is extremely ridiculous for a man to talk always of himself, altho it be to himself ; to avoid this impertinence, I will introduce several Persons of great merit into this Discourse, the very remembrance of whom will give me more satisfaction than I can expect from any Conversation, since I have had the

Vol. II. A misfor-

misfortune to lose that of my Lord D'AUBIGNY¹.

At the time of the Prince of CONDE's Imprisonment², I had a great intimacy with the Duke of CANDALE. This commerce had nothing of design or interest in it; but was purely occasioned by pleasures and good-fellowship, and entertained by the bare satisfaction we took in one another's company. He had formerly lived in a strict sort of an amity with MORET³, and the Chevalier DE LA VIEUVILLE; which VINEUIL called *the League*, by way of ridicule. Nor was this nickname altogether undeserv'd: for they improved a thousand trifles into secrets, made mysteries of the most insignificant nothings, and met together in private, at least ten times a day, without any other pleasure, than that of being separated from others. It was my good fortune to be admitted into their Confidence, which, at last, broke off without any occasion for a rupture on either side.

Monsieur DE VARDES, when he went to the army, had left behind him a Mistress at Paris⁴, who was one of the most agreeable women in the world: she had formerly had a Lover, and had been in love her self; but as her tenderness was wholly exhausted in her first Amours, it was impossible for her now to have a real Passion; so that she studied nothing but downright Gallantry, which she managed with great art and address, and cover'd with an air of simplicity; making the easiness and freedom of her Wit pass for Ingenuoufness and Plainness. As her History was well known, she had not the assurance to set up for a Prude; and, instead

¹ My Lord d'Aubigny died in 1665.

² In the year 1650.

³ Count Moret, eldest Brother to the Marquis de Vardes.

⁴ Madam de St. Loup.

instead of making a great figure in the world, she chose a retir'd Life, to which the present circumstances of her fortune induc'd her, and carried on this seeming negligence with a great deal of cunning. She never went to the Louvre to dispute Gallants with those young Beauties, which make so great a noise in the world; but had address enough to disengage a Lover from their Charms; and was no less industrious to preserve, than she had been to gain him. She would not suffer him to maintain the least correspondence with any Woman of tolerable Beauty; and if he perform'd but common Civilities to his friends, she would reproach him with throwing away that love upon others, which was only due to her self. Private Pleasures made her fear the loss of her Lover; and she was afraid of being forgotten in publick Diversions. Above all, she exclaim'd against the Entertainments of the Commandeur^s, in which men breath'd a certain air of freedom, inconsistent with a nice and refin'd Passion: in short, if all your applications and thoughts did not center in her, she complain'd of being abandon'd; and because she protested that she was wholly yours, she expected that you should be entirely devoted to her.

Monsieur DE VARDES being absent, could not maintain himself long in the affections of so tyrannick and humourfom a Mistress. She surrender'd her self, at first sight, to the young Duke of CANDALE: nay, 'tis said, that her design preceded the impression which his presence made, and that she had resolv'd to possess him, before she had seen him. Monsieur DE VARDES was sensibly touch'd at this alteration in her, knowing it would rob him of a pleasure that was very dear to him; however, like a man of honour, he made no noise

A 2

about

^s *The Commandeur de Souvré.*

about it, looking upon the Duke of CANDALE with the discontent of a Rival, and not with the hatred of an Enemy.

MORET, whose gravity personated honour in every thing, looked upon himself as injured, in the person of his Brother, and improved that into a real Affront, which the party concerned took only for a bare Disappointment. His complaints, at first, ran in a high strain; but finding them ill received in the world, he altered his language, without altering his conduct. He said, he was a very unhappy man, to be so little regarded by a person for whom he had all his life so great a consideration; that the Duke of CANDALE was little to be pitied; that he would find those that better deserved his friendship; and that 'twas with a great concern that he saw himself obliged to look out for others, upon whom he might securely depend. After this rate he talked in all Companies, with a seeming modesty, which is a surer evidence of vanity, than a moderate degree of assurance. As for the Chevalier DE LA VIEUVILLE, he looked upon himself to be disobliged, as soon as MORET thought so too; and partly by the natural heat of his Temper, and partly to please his Friend, he carried these expostulations higher than ever.

I kept the Duke of CANDALE company as usual; and as he could not be without some one or other to unbosom himself, to he soon made me the confident of his Complaints upon the behaviour of these Gentlemen, and shortly after of his Passion for Madam DE ST. LOUP. In the heat of this new Confidence, he communicated to me the most trivial things that beset him; which, tho they appear weighty things to a Lover, are yet very indifferent to those that are obliged to hear them. I seemed, however, to receive them as things of great

great importance, tho, in truth, I looked upon them as impertinent trifles. But his humour was agreeable, his deportment obliging, and his air so noble, that I took a pleasure to behold him, at the same time when I took little or none at all to hear him talk. Till then, I had not the least Design in my correspondence with him. But when I found I had some authority with him, I thought it would not be amiss to manage and cultivate the friendship of a Person, who was one day to make a considerable figure in the Kingdom; and so I made it my particular business to study him, and omitted nothing to engage him, on his most sensible side. I commended his Mistress, without betraying my opinion, for indeed she seemed to me exceeding amiable; and I blamed the behaviour of MORET, and of the Chevalier DE LA VIEUVILLE, who, in my judgment, had no manner of reason for what they did.

There are certain Insinuations, which the least artificial man may honestly make use of; and there is a Complaisance to be practised, on occasion, as far distant from flattery, as it is from rudeness. As I knew the Duke of CANDAL to be amorous in his Temper, I took care to suit my Conversation to it, and to entertain him with the most tender things I knew. His Humour was sweet and delicate, and his Judgment was exact enough in things that required no great profoundness of thought to dive into them. Besides his natural inclination, he bent his whole study that way, and I industriously furnish'd him with proper subjects to employ that talent upon. Thus when we parted from one another, we did it without any of those Disgusts, in which Conversation generally ends; and as he was pleased with me, because he was better pleased with himself, he daily increased his affection.

tion to me, in proportion to his being more delighted with himself.

Those who expect Docility in others, seldom establish the superiority of their judgment, without discovering a troublesome, imperious temper. Merit does not always make an impression on the most honourable persons; every one is jealous of his own deserts, so that we cannot easily suffer those of another. A mutual complaisance, for the most part, gains our Affections; nevertheless, since we give this way as much as we receive, the pleasure of being flatter'd is sometimes dear-bought, by the violence we put upon our selves to flatter others. But he that commends, without expecting a return of the Compliment, doubly obliges us, by giving his commendations, and dispensing with ours. 'Tis a great secret, in a familiar commerce with other men, to turn them, as far and as honourably as we can, to the side of Self-love. When a man finds a fit opportunity to examine them, and makes them sensible of some talents in themselves, which they knew nothing of before, they are secretly pleased at the discovery of this concealed merit, and are so much the more unwilling to part with us, as they desire to be agreeable to themselves.

I may, perhaps, justly incur censure for quitting particular things, to enlarge upon general Observations; and, indeed, I should have been more careful to avoid it, if I could entertain the Publick with Affairs of great importance. But as I only pretend to talk to my self upon matters of little consequence, I do by my self as I have frequently done by others; and aiming at nothing else, but barely to please my self, I employ my Invention to find out matter of satisfaction. I will, therefore, abandon my self to my fancy, provided it does not carry me into extravagancies; for irregularity and constraint ought
to

to be equally avoided: but because I will not ramble too far, return to the Narration I begun.

The first thing the Court did after the Confinement of the Prince of CONDE', was to go with some forces into Normandy, to turn the Duchess of LONGUEVILLE out of that Province, and to lodge those Governments in other hands, which were then possess'd by the Creatures of that Family. I took this Journey with the Duke of CANDALE, and for two days together, when the roads and weather were extremely bad, we were scarce one hour asunder; and our Conversation was so much the more entertaining, as it ran upon variety of matters.

After we had talk'd of his Amours, and those of other persons, till the subject was quite exhausted, and had discours'd indifferently of all sorts of pleasures, we fell insensibly into the miserable condition wherein the Prince was at present, after he had acquir'd so much Glory in the world, and had pass'd thro' so many considerable Posts. I told him, ' That so great and so unfortunate a Prince ought ' to be universally lamented: that, in truth, his ' conduct had been something disrespectful to the ' Queen, and no less disobliging to the Cardinal; ' but that these were Faults against the Court, and ' not Crimes against the State, which ought not to ' obliterate those important services that he had ' done the Nation in general: that his services had ' supported the Cardinal, and secur'd him in that ' power, which his Eminence now employ'd to ' ruin him: that France had, perhaps, been reduc'd ' to the last extremities in the beginning of the Regency, had it not been for the Battle of Rocroy, ' which was intirely owing to the Prince's conduct: ' that all the ill steps the Court had made after ' the Battle of Lens, were without his privity and ' direction, and that he alone had retriev'd Affairs

' in the War of Paris: that after so many signal
 ' Services, the offence he had given, was wholly to
 ' be charg'd on the impetuosity of his Temper,
 ' which he was not master of, but that all his de-
 ' signs and actions manifestly tended to the Grandeur
 ' of the King, and Advantage of the whole Nation.
 ' I don't know, *continu'd I*, what the Court propose
 ' to gain by his confinement; but this I am certain
 ' of, that nothing could be more welcome to the
 ' Spaniards.'

I am oblig'd, says the Duke of CANDALE, *to*
the Prince, for a thousand Civilities I have receiv'd
from him, notwithstanding his spleen against the Duke
of ESPERNON, my father. However, I have,
perhaps, shew'd too grateful a sense of such light obli-
gations; and I know full well, that I have been blam'd
for not engaging myself far enough in the interests of my
Family. But let the World say what they please, all
those discourses shall not hinder me from being his most
bumble servant; neither shall his present Disgrace keep
me from being so still. But considering in what cir-
cumstances I stand at Court, I can only grieve in pri-
vate for his misfortunes: this, indeed, is unserviceable
to him in his present condition, but it might be fatal to
me, if I made it appear.

' You have express'd your self on this occasion,
 ' said I to him, like a Person of Honour, and 'tis so
 ' much the more generous in you, because the Im-
 ' prisonment of the Prince is the most advantageous
 ' thing you cou'd have desired. I look upon you
 ' at present, to be the most considerable Person in
 ' France, if you have a mind to be so: our Princes
 ' of the Blood are sent to the Bois de Vincennes,
 ' from whence, in all probability, they will not
 ' come out in haste. Monsieur DE TURENNE,
 ' and Monsieur DE BOUILLON, are gone off to
 ' serve them. The Duke of NEMOURS, as much
 ' a Man of Honour as he is, signifies just nothing,
 ' and

‘ and does not know at present what party to take.
 ‘ The Duke of GUISE is a Prisoner in Spain ; all
 ‘ the rest of our Noblemen are either suspected, or
 ‘ neglected at least, by the Cardinal. As affairs
 ‘ stand at present, if you don’t put a just value
 ‘ upon the eminent rank you hold in the World,
 ‘ and the good qualities of your Person, do not
 ‘ blame Fortune in the least, but e’en thank your
 ‘ self, for being wanting to your self.’

He listen’d to me with great attention ; and being more affected with my discourse than I imagin’d he wou’d have been, he thank’d me very heartily for the hints I gave him. He told me frankly, that his Youth and his Pleasures had hitherto hindred him from applying himself to business ; but that he was resolv’d to shake off this lazy unactive Life, and to set every wheel a going, in order to make himself considerable. *I will, continued he, communicate a secret to you, which I never yet imparted to any one ; you cannot imagine how much I am in the Cardinal’s good graces. You know, that he intends I shou’d marry one of his Nieces, and ’tis commonly believed, that his good inclinations to me are groundd upon the project of this Alliance. I my self ascribe part of his kindness to it ; but either I am exceedingly mistaken, or else he has an unaccountable fondness for my Person. I will trust you with a greater secret still than this, which is, that I don’t perceive in my self the least inclination to love him ; and to deal plainly with you, I am as cold to his Eminence, as his Eminence is to the other Courtiers.*

‘ I had much rather, *said I to him*, that you really loved him, for you’ll find it a difficult matter
 ‘ to conceal your true Sentiments from a person of
 ‘ his penetration. If you will be advis’d by me, see
 ‘ him but seldom in private ; and when you are
 ‘ oblig’d to do it, entertain him with your devotion to him in general, without descending to
 nice

‘ nice particulars, which may give him leifure to
‘ fift you, and an opportunity to know you. When
‘ the King and Queen are with him, when he feeks
‘ to divert himfelf with the ordinary Courtiers, ne-
‘ ver fail to make your appearance among them;
‘ and there endeavour, by the moft complaifant
‘ and winning carriage towards him, to fecure that
‘ Friendfhip, which he is dispos’d, on his part, to
‘ cultivate. If he was really inclin’d to have a
‘ Favourite, his familiarity wou’d be very advan-
‘ tageous to you; but as ’tis impoffible his affec-
‘ tion fhould be fo difinterefted, as not to be mix’d
‘ with defign, a frequent correffpondence with him,
‘ will make him difcover your weak fide, before
‘ you are in the leaft acquainted with his. Let a
‘ perfon of your age be mafter of never fo much
‘ diffimulation, yet he’ll find it a great difadvan-
‘ tage to have all his actions fcann’d by a prying
‘ old Minifter, who is fuperior to him, as well by
‘ the eminence of his Poft, as that of his Expe-
‘ rience. Take my word for’t, Sir, ’tis dangerous
‘ to fee a fkilful man too often, when the difference,
‘ and frequently the clafhing of Interests will not
‘ permit us to refofe an entire confidence in him.
‘ If this maxim ought to be receiv’d by other Na-
‘ tions, much more ought it to be eternally prac-
‘ tis’d in ours, where our penetration to dif-
‘ cover others, is much greater than our diffimu-
‘ lation to conceal our felves. Don’t prefume there-
‘ fore that you are able to combat the Cardinal
‘ at his own weapons, or to vie in cunning and
‘ finess with him. Be fatisfy’d with endeavouring
‘ to make your felf as agreeable to him as you
‘ can, and leave the reft to be brought about by
‘ his own inclination. Inclination is a pleafant mo-
‘ tion of the Soul, which is therefore the dearer
‘ to us, becaufe it feems to be purely of our own
‘ growth. It is the product of our tendernes;
‘ which

' which fondly cherishes it with pleasure : in which
 ' particular it differs from Esteem, which is of fo-
 ' reign extraction, and maintains the ground it has
 ' won upon us, not by the favour of our own opi-
 ' nion, but by the justice we are oblig'd to pay to
 ' virtuous Persons.

' We shall, in all probability, shortly see the
 ' time, when the Cardinal will have occasion for
 ' the services of those about him : therefore you
 ' must make your self consider'd by him as a ser-
 ' viceable man, after you have gain'd his love by
 ' being agreeable. The surest way for you to be
 ' entirely in his favour, is to let him see, that by
 ' making you his Friend, he will consult his inter-
 ' est, as well as gratify his affection : and you
 ' will infallibly succeed in your design, by pro-
 ' mising him the assistance of the credit and au-
 ' thority which you will gain, by steering a diffe-
 ' rent course from that of the Duke of ESPE-
 ' RNON, without departing from his Interests, which
 ' ought always to be your own. 'Tis happy for
 ' you, that nature has given you a humour direct-
 ' ly opposite to his. Nothing in the universe can
 ' be more contrary, than the sweetness of your
 ' Temper, and the austerity of his ; than your com-
 ' plaisant Carriage, and his splenetick Roughness ;
 ' in short, than your insinuating Address, and his
 ' haughty imperious Behaviour. Let me therefore
 ' advise you to follow your own natural temper,
 ' but take care not to be misled by any blaze
 ' of false Glory. It is no easy matter to distinguish
 ' the false from the true ; an ill-grounded Haugh-
 ' tiness often passes for greatness of Soul ; and as
 ' we are too nice in whatever regards our Qua-
 ' lity, so we shew less concern than we ought for
 ' great things, which better deserve our conside-
 ' ration. The true Character of the Duke of Es-
 ' PERNON, unless I am mightily mistaken, is

‘ this : in the Respect that he demands, in the de-
 ‘ voirs that are paid him, he can easily forget what
 ‘ is owing to the Governor, and to the Colonel*,
 ‘ provided you pay that to the Duke of ESPER-
 ‘ NON which does not belong to him. I don’t
 ‘ pretend that Persons of great Quality ought not
 ‘ to value themselves upon being distinguish’d by
 ‘ their Rank, but then they should endeavour to me-
 ‘ rit this distinction, and not presumptuously arro-
 ‘ gate it to themselves.

‘ It would be a scandalous thing, for a man
 ‘ tamely to part with any Privileges acquir’d by the
 ‘ merits and reputation of his Predecessors : nor
 ‘ can he maintain these Rights with too much re-
 ‘ solution, when he is left in possession of them ;
 ‘ but it is not the same with new pretensions,
 ‘ which are to be establish’d by a nice obliging ad-
 ‘ dress, before the world takes any notice of them.
 ‘ In such a case, we must first make our applica-
 ‘ tion to others, that they may afterwards insen-
 ‘ sibly do the same by us ; and, instead of assuming
 ‘ by Arrogance, what may be deny’d with Justice,
 ‘ a man of true conduct will leave no method un-
 ‘ try’d, to procure that to be given him, which
 ‘ he does not demand.

‘ Be complaisant, obliging, and liberal : let eve-
 ‘ ry man find with you both his Convenience and
 ‘ Satisfaction ; and the world will, of its own ac-
 ‘ cord, put that into your hands, which you will
 ‘ unsuccessfully demand by an affected Haughtiness.
 ‘ No one thinks it much to pay respect, when it
 ‘ comes voluntarily from him, because it lies in
 ‘ his power whether he will pay it or no ; and be-
 ‘ cause he thinks he rather gives you testimonies
 ‘ of

* The Duke of Espernon was then Governor of Guienne, and
 Colonel General of the French Infantry.

' of his Friendship than of his Duty. The jealousy
 ' of maintaining one's Liberty, is common to all
 ' Mankind, but different people make it to consist
 ' in different things. Some throw off all manner of
 ' Superiority; and with some others, the choice of
 ' their Superiors supplies the place of Liberty.
 ' The French particularly are of this humour:
 ' equally impatient of Authority and Freedom, they
 ' won't have a Master put upon them without re-
 ' luctance; nor can they continue their own Masters
 ' without disgust. This makes them consider how
 ' to bestow themselves; and being over-satisfy'd
 ' with the disposal of their own wills, they submit
 ' with pleasure to a Master of their own chusing.
 ' This, generally speaking, is our natural Temper,
 ' which you ought to consult, rather than your
 ' own, in the Conduct you are to observe in the
 ' world.

' There are two things among us, which distin-
 ' guish a Man from the rest of the World: the
 ' first, is the open Favour of the King; the second,
 ' an acknowledg'd Merit in War. Favour, which
 ' in Spain does not abate the punctilios about Pre-
 ' cedency, removes abundance of contests in France,
 ' where every one wholly pursues his own Interest,
 ' under the specious pretence of honouring the
 ' confidence or inclination of his Prince. The most
 ' corrupted persons, whose number is very great,
 ' carry their Servitude where they hope to find
 ' their Fortune; and those who least devote them-
 ' selves to others, yet, for all that, pretend to some
 ' merit by their Submissions. There are, indeed,
 ' Men of false generosity, that take a pride in de-
 ' spising the Ministry; and there are fierce Spirits,
 ' that think themselves men of resolution: but we
 ' have few men of address and dexterity enough
 ' to maintain their dignity in the management of
 ' their affairs. To take it right, the Favourites,
 ' with

' with us carry the world before them, if the
 ' Court does not depart from its receiv'd maxims.
 ' As for martial Merit, 'tis of extraordinary im-
 ' portance ; and when a man has worthily com-
 ' manded great Armies, the impressiion of this au-
 ' thority still continues with him, and keeps its
 ' ground, even at the Court it self. We honour,
 ' with pleasure, a General, under whom we have
 ' acquir'd honour ; and even those who gain'd but
 ' very little of it, in their softer moments remem-
 ' ber, with delight, their past fatigues. We en-
 ' tertain our selves with our past Actions, tho we
 ' are idle for the present ; we call to mind the
 ' dangers we have run, in times of security ; and
 ' the image of War never presents it self to us,
 ' even in Peace, but we think both of the com-
 ' mand that has been exercis'd over us, and the
 ' obedience we have paid. Now 'tis this merit of
 ' War, which you ought to be ambitious to at-
 ' tain ; this should be the scope of all your endea-
 ' vours, in order to get, one day, the command
 ' of an Army. A post so noble, and so glorious,
 ' equals Subjects to Sovereigns in authority ; and as
 ' it sometimes makes a private Man a Conqueror,
 ' it may make the greatest Prince the most mise-
 ' rable Man upon earth, if he neglects a Virtue
 ' so necessary to support his Fortune. After you
 ' have carefully regulated your conduct for the
 ' Court, and animated your ambition for the Wars,
 ' it will then be necessary for you to procure your
 ' self Friends, whose well-establish'd Reputation
 ' may contribute to fix yours, and who will cry
 ' up your new application to business, when they
 ' see you give your self up to it in good ear-
 ' nest.

' Of all the men I know, there are none whom
 ' I should desire you to be more thorowly ac-
 ' quainted

acquainted with, than Monsieur DE PALUAU⁷,
 and Monsieur DE MIOSENS⁸. The intimate
 friendship I have, both with the one and the other,
 may, perhaps, incline you to suspect that I am
 partial in their commendation: but I desire you
 to believe no such matter; and take my word
 for't, you will not easily find two Persons of their
 sincerity and honour in the world. I own to
 you, however, that the Marquis DE CREQUI'S⁹
 Friendship seems to me preferable to any other.
 His generous and lively warmth for his Friends;
 his plain and unaffected Sincerity, make me have
 an infinite esteem for him. Besides, his noble Am-
 bition, his Courage, his Genius in Military Affairs,
 and his universal Knowledge, add to our Friend-
 ship a particular consideration for him. We may
 give him, without the least partiality, that noble
 Character which was bestow'd upon one of the
 Antients; *ita ut ad id unum natus esse videretur*
quod aggredereetur. When his choice determin'd
 him to his present employment, nature had equal-
 ly prepar'd him for all; he being capable of a
 hundred different things, and as fit for any pro-
 fession as his own. He might acquire Reputa-
 tion by Learning, if he had not resolv'd to gain
 it wholly by Arms. A noble principle of Am-
 bition does not admit little Vanities: however,
 he is not less curious for it; and as in his pri-
 vate studies he finds a particular pleasure in im-
 proving himself; so to the great advantages of
 his Knowledge, he joins the merit of conceal-
 ing it discreetly. Perhaps you would not expect
 to

⁷ Philip de Clerembaut, Count de Paluan, was made a Marechal of France in 1653. He died in 1665.

⁸ Casar Phœbus d'Albret, Count de Mioffens, who was made a Marechal of France in 1653, and died in 1676.

⁹ Francis de Crequi, Marquis de Marimès, made a Marechal of France in 1668.

' to find these Abilities in one of his youth, which
 ' we seldom meet in the most advanc'd Age; and
 ' I own, that by a favourable prepossession, we
 ' sometimes bestow an Esteem upon young men,
 ' which they don't deserve: but then sometimes
 ' we are too slow in doing justice to their Merits;
 ' forgetting to commend what they have worthily
 ' perform'd in a time of Exercise and Action, to
 ' praise them for what they have done in their
 ' Retirement and Repose. We seldom propor-
 ' tion Reputation to a man's Virtue; and I have
 ' seen a thousand Men in my time, that have been
 ' esteem'd either for a Merit which they were not
 ' then in possession of, or for that which they had
 ' already lost: but in the Marquis DE CREQUI
 ' the case is quite otherwise. Whatever great ex-
 ' pectations he gives us of what he may be here-
 ' after, he lets us see at present, enough to satisfy
 ' the most difficult; so that he is the only person
 ' who may desire that which others have reason to
 ' be afraid of, I mean the attention of Observers,
 ' and the delicacy of good Judges.

' A prime Minister, or Favourite, who would
 ' make it his business to find out at Court, some
 ' person worthy of his confidence, could not, in
 ' my opinion, pitch upon a Man that deserves it
 ' more than Monsieur DE RUVIGNY¹⁰. You
 ' may, perhaps, find in some others, either brighter
 ' Parts, or some Actions that have made a greater
 ' noise than his: but to take a man altogether, and
 ' judge of him, not by any one period, but the
 ' whole tenor of his Life; I am acquainted with
 ' none, who better deserves our esteem, and with
 ' whom we may longer maintain a Confidence
 ' without suspicion, and a Friendship without dis-
 ' gust.

¹⁰ The Marquis de Ruvigny, Father to the late Earl of Galway.

' gust. Let People make what complaints they
 ' please of the corruption of the age, there are
 ' still faithful Friends to be found : but the greatest
 ' part of persons of honour have a sort of rigi-
 ' dity with them, which tempts people to prefer
 ' the insinuations of a pretender, to such an austere
 ' integrity. I have observ'd in those Gentlemen,
 ' whom the world calls Solid and Wise, either a
 ' cumbersome Gravity, or a tiresome Dulness.
 ' Their good Sense, which perhaps has been ser-
 ' viceable to you once in your affairs, is so imper-
 ' tinent, as to disturb your Pleasures every day.
 ' However, a man is forc'd, in his own defence,
 ' to keep fair and even with these Gentlemen, tho'
 ' they plague him never so much, in consideration
 ' that he may have an occasion, one time or other,
 ' to make use of their service ; and because they
 ' never deceive you, when you confide in them,
 ' they think they have a right to teaze you when
 ' they please, altho you have nothing to trust them
 ' with. The probity of Monsieur RUVIGNY,
 ' which makes him altogether as proper for a
 ' Confident as any body, is attended with nothing
 ' but what is easy and free : he is a cordial and
 ' agreeable Friend, whose Intimacy is solid, whose
 ' Familiarity is pleasing, and whose Conversation is
 ' always sensible and improving.

' The confinement of the Prince has driven from
 ' the Court a considerable person, for whom I have
 ' an inexpressible value, I mean the Duke of LA
 ' ROCHEFOUCAULT, whose Courage and Con-
 ' duct will convince the world, that he is capable
 ' of every thing which he has a mind to pretend
 ' to. He will now find Reputation in a place, where
 ' his Interest will be but little concern'd ; but his
 ' ill Fortune will have this good effect, as to make
 ' a full discovery of that Merit, which the reserved-
 ' ness of his temper has hitherto reveal'd to none

‘ but the nicest observers. To whatever unhappy
 ‘ condition his destiny may reduce him, you will
 ‘ find him equally free from Weakness, and from
 ‘ a false Resolution; being cool and fearless, in
 ‘ the most dangerous Circumstances, yet not per-
 ‘ severing obstinately to play out a desperate game,
 ‘ either out of heat of Resentment, or an indiscreet
 ‘ Bravery. In the common course of his life, his
 ‘ Commerce is civil and entertaining, his Conver-
 ‘ sation just and polite: all that he says is solid and
 ‘ well digested; and in his Writings, the easiness
 ‘ of the expression equals the clearness of the
 ‘ thought. I will not say any thing to you of Mon-
 ‘ sieur DE TURENNE; it would be too great a
 ‘ presumption in a private man, to think that his
 ‘ single opinion wou’d be consider’d among pub-
 ‘ lick testimonies, and that universal justice which
 ‘ whole Nations have pay’d to his merit. Be-
 ‘ sides, it signifies little to entertain you long about
 ‘ Persons who are at so great a distance, and con-
 ‘ sequently cannot promote your Interest.

‘ I now return to Monsieur DE PALLUAU and
 ‘ M. DE MIOSSENS, in order to characterize them
 ‘ by those Qualities, which may either be agreeable
 ‘ or useful to you. You will find in your acquaint-
 ‘ tance with Monsieur DE PALLUAU, all the a-
 ‘ greeableness imaginable, and as much safety and
 ‘ secrecy as you can desire. You must not expect
 ‘ to find in him the forwardness of giddy young
 ‘ fellows, who pretend to serve you, but whose
 ‘ imprudence you have more reason to fear, than
 ‘ to be fond of their heat. He will ever do punc-
 ‘ tually, what you shall desire of him; and I dare
 ‘ engage he will be wanting in none of those of-
 ‘ fices which a nice Courtier is capable of perform-
 ‘ ing. If your Friendship is but once well knit,
 ‘ he will interest himself in your Conduct, and
 ‘ you will find him more serviceable to regulate
 ‘ that

' that by his advice, than proper to advance your
 ' affairs by his vigor. I ever found him a great
 ' enemy to false pretenders of Generosity : and be-
 ' cause he has ever ridiculed the ostentation of an
 ' affected Probity, some malicious people have con-
 ' cluded that he is no great admirer of Sincerity.
 ' But I dare venture to say, that I never knew in
 ' any man an Integrity more natural, than I have
 ' found in him. He uses no deceit, no artifice,
 ' no finess with his Friends : he is devoted to
 ' the Court without any fordid prostitution ; and
 ' endeavours to please, by a delicacy untainted with
 ' Adulation.

' An intimacy with Monsieur DE MIOSSENS
 ' will be more advantageous to your affairs ; par-
 ' ticularly in this critical juncture, where almost
 ' every thing is owing to Industry. He cannot fail
 ' making a great figure at a Court, where there
 ' will be clashing Interests, and great caballing.
 ' He will make no difficulty of opening himself
 ' to you at first sight, out of hopes that you may
 ' serve him upon occasion ; and if you maintain a
 ' fair correspondence with him, he will make it his
 ' particular business to have the honour of obliging
 ' you in all things. Do but shew a little diligence
 ' on your side, and you will engage him to mind
 ' nothing but your service ; if you are complaisant,
 ' he will be a Flatterer ; express an affection for
 ' him, and he will be more sensible of it than you
 ' cou'd well believe, or he himself cou'd think to
 ' be. Then he quits all consideration of Interest,
 ' and animating himself with all the zeal of Friend-
 ' ship, he will at last undertake your affairs with
 ' the same vigor as if they were his own. In-
 ' dustrious, punctual, diligent in the prosecution
 ' of them ; reckoning for nothing those general
 ' offices by which ordinary Friendships are enter-
 ' tain'd, he will not be brought to believe, that

' you can be satisfied with him, much less will he be
 ' satisfied with himself, till he has most effectually
 ' serv'd you. The only danger you run, is, lest you
 ' should happen to offend the niceness of his Hu-
 ' mour. A forgetfulness; an indifference shown
 ' without design, may occasion his to you in good
 ' earnest; a little raillery upon a Mistress whom
 ' he loves, a discourse of his misconstru'd, or ex-
 ' pos'd, pass with him for sensible Affronts; nay,
 ' without proportioning his resentment to the of-
 ' fence, he will take occasion perhaps to revenge
 ' himself upon you in things of the greatest impor-
 ' tance to you. As no man living is more capable
 ' of setting off and extolling your good qualities,
 ' while he loves you, so no man better knows how
 ' to expose your infirmities and defects, in the most
 ' aggravating manner, than he does, when he
 ' thinks you give him a just provocation to break
 ' with you. This is what you have to apprehend
 ' from his Humour; but it will be no difficult mat-
 ' ter to avoid it. To make sure of him, you have
 ' nothing else to do, but to make sure of your self;
 ' and if you shew the least regard to him, I dare
 ' engage that he will return it with far greater.'

As for Monsieur DE PALLUAU, replied the Duke of CANDALE, I own to you, that I could like his Humour as soon as any man's in the world; and you will oblige me, since you have so particular a share of his Friendship, if you will introduce me into his. I have as great an esteem for Monsieur DE MIOSSENS as you can have. I know well enough, that no man can be master of better Qualities; no man has more wit, or exerts it more readily, or more effectually than he does to serve his Friends: but he has hitherto shown so disobliging a Behaviour to me, that I am resolv'd never to make any advances towards an acquaintance with him. If he had any inclination to court mine, or if you cou'd contrive a way to bring us together,

together, and lay the foundation of a Friendship between us, I should take no less delight to see it effected, than I should find my advantage in it.

MORET, and the Chevalier DE LA VIEUVILLE, had, it seems, possess'd the Duke of CANDALE with an ill opinion of him, and he was inclinable enough of himself to receive it, out of a secret pique of Honour, which made him resent the imperiousness which Monsieur DE MIOSSENS assum'd with him on all occasions, and which his unactive and lazy humour made him think not worth his while to oppose. I would not in this be understood, as if I call'd his Courage in question: for he really did not want it, but the easiness of his temper, and his indifference in all things, had an air of weakness in it, particularly on little occasions, which he did not think important enough to disturb his quiet. Every thing of Eclat, and which made a noise in the World, was an incentive to his Glory; and Glory made him discover the true use of his Spirit. I have even seen him go farther than he ought to have done for his own Honour, after he had slighted little matters, which however made a bustle at the end. He was forward enough to hazard his fortune, nay, and his life too, when he thought his Reputation was thorowly engaged: but he gave the world too much advantage over him by supineness; and generally the world carried it too far, by maliciously ridiculing his conduct, which made him lose the moderation of his humour, that was generally soft enough, but always less soft than ambitious.

This is a short sketch of the Duke of CANDALE's Character: but as he made noise enough in the world, to give people a curiosity to know him perfectly, it will not be amiss to draw him in full length. I have known but few Men who had so many different Qualities: but he had this advantage

tage in the commerce of the World, that Nature expos'd only those to publick view, that were agreeable, and took care to conceal whatever might create aversion. I never in all my life beheld so noble an Air as his: all his Person was agreeable, and nothing came amiss to him, that lay within the reach of an ordinary Genius, both for a pleasant Conversation, and Diversions. A small acquaintance made him be beloved: but it was impossible for one to have a long intimacy with him, without being disgusted; so little care did he take to preserve your friendship, and so fickle was he in his own. While he was thus indifferent, men of address left him, without breaking off abruptly, and brought down their familiarity to a bare acquaintance: those of more tender inclinations complain'd of him, as some do of an ungrateful Mistress, whom they cannot however part with. Thus the Charms of his Person supported him in spite of all his defects, and oblig'd even those who had been provok'd by him, to have a favourable opinion of him. As for him, he liv'd with his Friends, as the generality of Mistresses do with their Lovers: whatever services you had done him, he ceas'd to love you, when you ceas'd to please him; being, like them, disgusted with a long acquaintance, and fond of the pleasure which a new friendship gives, as the Ladies are of the tender delights of a new-born passion. However, he left his old engagements without an open rupture, and you wou'd have given him some uneasiness to have broken off entirely with him; the noise of such a separation having something of violence in it, which was contrary to his nature. Besides, he was not for excluding the return of an old Friend, who had been either agreeable or serviceable to him. As he was addicted to Pleasure, and interested at the same time, he would come back to you upon the score of your agreeableness, and

and court you in his necessities. He was extremely covetous, and yet a spendthrift; fond of making a great figure, tho he did not like the charge of it. He was easy, and vain-glorious; selfish, but faithful and honest; qualities very oddly sortcd, but which, however, met together in the same person. There was scarce any thing troubled him more, than to be worse than his word, and when Interest, the usual director of all his actions, made him break it, he was so dissatisfy'd with himself, that he was asham'd to see you, till he thought you had forgotten the wrong he had done you. Then he would bestir himself with new vigour for you, and thought himself secretly oblig'd to you for having reconcil'd him to himself. If his interest was not concern'd, he would seldom disoblige you: but then you were to expect as few good offices from his friendship, as injuries from his hatred; and 'tis sufficient matter of complaint, among friends, the not having any thing to commend a man for, but his doing us no hurt.

As for the fair Sex, he had for a long while an Indifference to them, or at least took but little pains to gain their Affections. When once he appear'd so amiable to them, they soon discover'd that his indifference was a loss rather to them, than to himself; and being acquainted with their own interest, they began to form designs upon a man who was too slow in executing any upon them. In short, they lov'd him, and then, at last, he knew what it was to love. Towards the latter part of his Life, all our Ladies began to cast their eyes on him: the most retir'd of the Sex sigh'd in secret for him; the most gallant, disputing the prize among themselves, strove to possess him, as their best fortune. After he had divided them in their interests of Gallantry, he reconcil'd them in their tears for his Death. All felt they lov'd him, and a common tenderness soon

became a general grief. Those whom he had formerly lov'd, reviv'd the memory of their old Passion, and fondly imagin'd they had just now lost what they had lost long before. Several that were indifferent to him, flatter'd themselves that they would not have been always so; and accusing Death of preventing their happiness, they mourn'd for so amiable a Person, of whom they might have been belov'd, had he liv'd. There are some that lamented him out of Vanity; and Ladies that never knew him, were seen to join their tears with the Parties concern'd, to give themselves a merit of Gallantry. But his true Mistress¹¹ made her self famous by the excess of her Affliction; and had, in my opinion, been happy, if she had kept it on to the last. One Amour is creditable to a Lady; and I know not whether it be not more advantageous to their Reputation, than never to have been in love.

A LETTER

TO

THE COUNT DE LIONNE.

I AM justly apprehensive, lest the continuance of our Correspondence may become troublesome to you, by reason of the continuance of my Disgrace: which will oblige me for the future to retrench much of my own satisfaction, not to abuse so warm a zeal as yours. Discretion is a virtue that ought to be practis'd with true Friends; and I am too much concern'd to preserve you, not to use
your

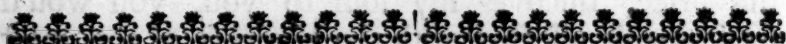
¹¹ *The Countess d'Olonne.*

your friendship with circumspection. If I durst, in this place, discover my soul to you, you wou'd see it deeply affected with the kindness of the most disinterested friend in the world; since nothing but your own generosity maintains me in your affection: which makes me believe that you have a mind to set an example to Posterity, which she must despair ever to be able to imitate. In short, I examine my self every way, and find nothing in me but what justifies the disgust which others ought to entertain of my person. Reflections would be very irksome to me, were they not alleviated by the remembrance of a person for whom I have the same veneration, which so accomplish'd a merit gains him from every body.

But I will no longer make so nice a Modesty as yours uneasy: and therefore proceed to the Judgment you have ask'd of me upon *Britannicus*¹. I have read it with attention enough to observe fine things in it. It exceeds, in my opinion, both *Alexander* and *Andromache*: the Verses of it are more magnificent; and I will not be surpriz'd if some Sublime be found in it. However, I deplore the misfortune of that Author, for having written so worthily upon a Subject which cannot afford an agreeable representation. And, indeed, the Characters of NARCISSUS, AGRIPPINA, and NERO; and the black and horrible idea which is entertain'd of their Crimes, cannot be effaced from the memory of the Spectators; and whatever efforts he can make to shake off the thoughts of their Cruelties, the horror he has for them, does in some measure destroy the merit of the Play.

A

¹ *A Tragedy, by Racine.*



A

L E T T E R

FROM

M. CORNEILLE,

TO

M. DE ST. EVREMOND.

*To return him Thanks for the Praises he
had bestow'd upon him, in the DISSERTATION
on RACINE'S Alexander.*

S I R,

THE obligation I have to you, is of such a nature as never to be worthily acknowledg'd by Thanks; and I am in such confusion about it, that I should still take up with silence, were I not apprehensive it should pass with you for Ingratitude. Altho such weighty Applause as yours ought to be extreme dear to us, there are yet conjunctures which infinitely raise the price of it. You honour me with your esteem, at a time when there seems to be a Party form'd to rob me of all. You support me, when they fancy they have thrown me down; and you give me a noble comfort for the niceness of our Age, when you vouchsafe to allow me the true taste

taste of Antiquity. This is a wonderful advantage for a man, who cannot doubt that Posterity will depend upon your Judgment: and after this, I must freely own to you, that I think I have some right to treat as ridiculous, those vain Trophies that are erected upon the imaginary ruins of mine; and to look down with pity on those obstinate prepossessions that were entertain'd for antient Heroes, new cast after our fashion.

Will you give me leave to add, in this place, that you have hit my weak side; and that my *Sophonisba*, for whom you show so much tenderness, has the best part of my own? How agreeably you flatter my Sentiments, when you confirm what I have advanc'd about the share which Love ought to have in noble Tragedies, and with what fidelity we ought to preserve to those illustrious Antients, those Characters of their Time, Nation, and Humour! I have hitherto been of opinion, that Love was a Passion attended with too much weakness to be predominant in an Heroick Piece: I would have it to be the Ornament, but not the Substance; and that great Souls should not be acted by it, any farther than it is consistent with nobler Impressions. Our Beaux and merry Sparks are of a contrary opinion; but since you declare for mine, 'tis a sufficient reason for me to be extremely beholden to you, and ever to profess my self,

S I R,

Your most humble and

most obedient Servant,

Corneille.

M.



M. DE ST. EVREMOND's

A N S W E R

T O

M. CORNEILLE.

S I R,

I DON'T doubt but you would be the most thankful person in the world, if one should do you any good Office, since you think your self obliged for the Justice which has been done you. If you were to thank all those who have the same opinion of your Works with my self, you must return acknowledgments to all those that understand them. I can assure you, that no man's Reputation was ever so well establish'd as yours is in England and Holland. The English, who are naturally prone enough to value any thing of their own, renounce that opinion, tho often well grounded, and think they do sufficient honour to their BEN JOHNSON¹, by calling him the *English Corneille*. Mr. WALLER, one of the greatest Wits of the Age, does still impatiently expect your new Plays, and

¹ Ben Johnson flourish'd in the Reigns of James I. and Charles I. He undertook to reform the English Stage, and did it with great success. His Comedies are much beyond his Tragedies. He died in 1637.

and fails not translating one or two Acts of them into English Verse, for his own satisfaction*. You are the only man of our Nation, whose thoughts have the advantage to hit his. He owns that they speak and write well in France; but of all the French, he says, that you alone know how to think. Monsieur Vossius, the greatest Admirer of Greece, who cannot bear the least comparison between the Grecians and the Latins, does yet prefer you before SOPHOCLES and EURIPIDES.

After the approbation of such great Men, you surprize me, to tell me that your Reputation is attack'd in France. Does it then fare with Good Taste, as with Fashions, which begin to settle among Foreigners, when they are old at Paris? I should not wonder to see them have some disgust for old Heroes, when we see a young one who eclipses all their Glory: but if we are still pleas'd to see them represented on our Theatres, how is it possible for them not to admire those you describe? I believe the influence of Ill Taste is upon the decline; and that the first Piece you shall give the Publick, will show, by the return of their former Applause, both the recovery of good sense, and the restoration of reason. I cannot conclude, without returning you most humble thanks for the honour you have done me. I should think my self unworthy of the praises you bestow on my Judgment; but as it is generally employ'd in finding out the Beauties of your Works, I confound our Interests, and with pleasure gratify a vanity mixt with the justice I do you.

* Mr. Waller hath translated into English Corneille's Pompey, assisted by the Earl of Dorset and Middlesex.



A LETTER

TO

THE COUNT DE LIONNE.

YOUR impatience for my return, increases mine, that I may have the pleasure to see you again : but you cannot entirely remove my apprehensions, that too earnest solicitations with Monsieur DE LIONNE, the Minister, may render you less agreeable, and my Affair importuning. I ought to be so equitable, as to manage his good-will, and believe that the weighty Affairs that lie upon his hands, are somewhat more pressing than my own. Your activity for your Friends, gives me this suspicion ; which, however, is not of long duration ; for your address heartens me again, and persuades me, that you will always nick the time. I should have been very sorry that the Comparison of the Prince, the side-wind Letter, and the Character of * * * should have been at the disposal of M. BARBEIN^{*}. As for all the rest, your theft has made it yours, provided my Name do not appear in it ; and I have no manner of share in it : so that the thing it self, and the management of it, depend upon you alone. You are too reasonable to be so concern'd as you seem to be, at what I have writ to you about the Printers in Holland. I had no other design in it, than to let you see how much I value the delicacy of

^{*} A famous Bookseller in Paris, who had surreptitiously printed some Pieces of M. de St. Evremond.

of so polite a style as yours : for, in truth, no man can write better than you do.

The new Writing of LISOLA^{*} was printed at Brussels, and only seven or eight Copies of it were brought to this place. One of my Friends read it to me, but would not let me have it. It is a continuation of Remarks on the Letter of Monsieur DE LIONNE, the Minister ; wherein he endeavours to prove, that all the advances made at Paris towards Peace, are only amusements, to hinder England and Holland from opposing the Conquest of the Netherlands ; and maintains, that the design of attacking Franche-Comté, and that of making Peace, were inconsistent ; drawing consequences from every thing. There are some things very witty in his Remarks ; but then there are too many jests, for so important a matter. The Spaniards cannot avoid accepting the alternative, England and Holland being the Umpires of the Peace ; but the Marquis DE CASTEL RODRIGO³ wishes for nothing more than the continuation of the War, which will bring the English and Dutch into his party. They very much wish for Peace here, but neglect nothing that regards the War.

I am very much oblig'd to Monsieur CORNEILLE for the honour he does me. His Letter is admirable, and I know not whether he writes better in Verse than in Prose. I desire you to deliver my Answer to him, and to assure him, that no man in the world has so great an esteem for anything that

^{*} Francis, Baron de Lisola, born at Bezançon, betook himself to the Emperor's service, who employ'd him in several Embassies, wherein he made himself very advantageously known. During the War in Flanders, the Garison of Lisle having intercepted a Letter, which M. de Lionne wrote to the King, M. de Lisola publish'd some Remarks upon it. He wrote also some other Pieces against France. See M. Bayle's Dictionary, in the Article of Lisola.

³ Governor of the Netherlands.

that comes from him, as my self. I have read neither *Amphitryon*³ nor *Laodice*⁴, but as I cast my eyes by chance upon the latter, the Verses have kept up my attention longer than I thought: I desire you to return the Author thanks, in my name, for sending me his Piece, which I shall read very carefully, and without doubt with great pleasure. You shall have no Compliments for your self; for a well-establish'd friendship rejects whatever looks like ceremony.

P. S. Since this Letter was written, I read an Aët of *Laodice*, which seems to me very fine.

MOLIERE surpasses PLAUTUS in his *Amphitryon*, as well as TERENCE in his other Plays.

T O T H E S A M E.

Nothing is so agreeable to Friendship, as well as Love, as the demonstration of a true Affection, which cannot be better express'd, than by bearing a part in the misfortunes of those we love. Your concern for the miscarriage of my Affair, takes off one half of my own, and puts me in a condition to bear the other patiently. I knew nothing of what you write to me, none of my Friends having been forward, no more than your self, in sending me a melancholy piece of news; but this discretion, as obliging as it is, gives me to understand, that they have but an ill opinion of my Constancy. Seven full years of Misfortunes ought at least to have inur'd me to Sufferings, if they have not been able to form in me a Virtue superior to them. To end a moral Discourse, impertinent in him that makes it, and too severe for him we entertain, I'll tell you, in few words, that I should have

³ A Comedy by Moliere.

⁴ A Tragedy by Thomas Corneille.

have been glad to see again the pleasantest Country I know of, and some Friends, as dear to me for the demonstrations of their Friendship, as in consideration of their merit. However, a man must not be driven to despair, because he lives in a Nation where delights are scarce. I content myself with Indolence, where I cannot enjoy Pleasures. I had still five or six years to relish Plays, Musick, and Good-cheer, and I must take up with Policy, Order, and Oeconomy ; and form to myself a languishing amusement from the contemplation of the grave Dutch Virtues. You will oblige me to return a thousand most humble thanks to Monsieur DE LIONNE, the Minister, for his kindness to me. I am so unprofitable a Servant, that I dare not even mention Gratitude ; but I am not the less sensible of the Obligation. You will oblige me likewise, to acquaint me with the state of my Affairs, and what answer has been return'd. Your Letter will certainly be receiv'd in the packet of Monsieur D'ESTRADES when he is here. As for the Airs and Novelties, I will not put him to so much charge for Postage : but pray send me nothing but what you like very well, either in Musick, or of any other kind. As for those Trifles with which I amus'd myself now and then, I have nothing but about one half of a discourse, which is not yet copied fair. About a year ago, the fancy took me to treat of *Interest in Persons altogether corrupted ; the too rigid Virtue ; and the sense of a Man of Honour, who keeps a Medium, and draws from both what ought to enter the Commerce of the world.* I had left those Papers in England, and found them lost, except some Periods of the last writing. I shall endeavour to make them up again ; but as they have too great a connexion with those that are lost, I believe the whole will be but indifferent.



INTEREST

IN

Persons altogether Corrupted.

The Corrupted speaks.

I Have pass'd, Gentlemen, thro' all conditions, and after an exact reflection upon Life, I find but two things that can deserve the thoughts and application of a wise man; the care of getting, and that of hoarding.

Honour is nothing but the infatuation of young men: 'tis by that a man begins his Reputation, when he is a fool; and he concludes it by that which is call'd *Corruption*, so soon as he becomes wise.

As for me, I never had my mind possess'd with Chimeras. *Duty, Friendship, Gratitude, Obligation*, and the rest of those errors that entangle Coxcombs and Fools in their snares, have not given me a moment's trouble in all my life. Nature sent me into the world with the true principles of Interest, which I have improv'd by Study, and fortified by Experience. Greediness, which causes the same thirst after Wealth, as Ambition doth after Power, has rais'd me to great advantages, without making me careless of the smallest profits.

There are a hundred different ways of getting, which are but so many different rewards of our industry.

industry. It would be a difficult thing to assign all the particular ways of getting ; but a man can never be deceiv'd, if he makes it his principal maxim, to *prefer the Profitable before the Honest*. To apply one's self to the profitable is to follow the intention of Nature ; which, by a secret instinct, leads us to what is agreeable to us, and obliges us to make all things center in our selves. *Honour* is an imaginary duty, which merely for the consideration of others, makes us abstain from the goods we might enjoy, or part with those which we should retain.

As for what relates to hoarding ; is it not reasonable we should manage with care, what we have acquir'd with difficulty ? So long as we have money in our coffers, we shall have friends and trusty servants¹ : if we exhaust it by a vain Liberality, we shall only give the world liberty to be ungrateful, when we have lost that which secur'd to us the services and respect of others. There are but a few grateful persons, and tho' we should meet with such, it is certain, that the price of Gratitude very rarely comes up to that of the Benefit.

There is one thing of great use, which I have happily practis'd ; and that is, Gentlemen, to promise eternally, and very rarely to perform. A man gets more services by Promises, than by Presents ; for Men generally endeavour to deserve, what they hope from us : but are beholden to themselves only for what they receive ; and either look upon it to be a recompence of their Pains, or an effect of their Industry. However, of all the several sorts of the Ungrateful, these seem to me to be the least dangerous, because they undeceive us immediately, and never put us to the expence of a second gift.

C 2

You

¹ This is one of Machiavel's thoughts.

You will meet with others much more to be fear'd, who perpetually extol the Good which is done them, so as to trouble the whole world with their acknowledgments: they have always the name of their Benefactor in their mouths, and his picture in their chambers; but what do they propose to themselves from this vain shew of Gratitude? They imagine it gives them a title to a new pretension; and whilst you think they are employ'd about acknowledging the favour which they so lately receiv'd, they think they have already done enough to deserve another, and will not be wanting to ask for it. A fine subtlety indeed, of this age, to turn Gratitude towards what is to come; which, till now, was nothing but the sense of a past Obligation!

As you are to live with Persons that have their designs upon you, 'tis your business to use all caution against them: but without putting your judgment to the expence of examining their good and evil Intentions, the best way will be, to secure your self by a general distrust of all Mankind. However, not to create an universal disgust, which would make all the world abandon you, it will be proper to appear disinterested sometimes, out of a secret design of Interest; it will be convenient, now and then, to do some publick actions of seeming Generosity, tho indeed 'tis but all artifice; and to force your Nature to do a favour, as nobly as if it came from a true Inclination. By this means, you will efface the remembrance of what is past, and make the world expect great matters from you for the future.

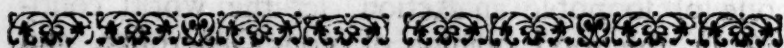
But on these rare occasions, the secret is, to chuse a Man of an establish'd merit, or one who for his agreeable qualities is generally belov'd: by this universal esteem, or friendship, every one foolishly thinks himself oblig'd by a favour, which

is receiv'd but by one single person. After the noise of so noble an Action, let the world continue in the good opinion of your Generosity, and take pleasure sometimes in enjoying the flattery of supple Slaves, and the approbation of ill Judges.

As by this conduct you have rais'd Desires, and permitted Hopes to be entertain'd, all those who think themselves deserving will strive to shew it in your presence. Your Enemies will endeavour to find out secret ways to reconcile themselves, that they may not be excluded from your Favours. Your Friends, animated by a new zeal, will do their utmost to deserve them; and those Persons, who are particularly devoted to you, will redouble their care and diligence in serving you.

Then, when you see all the world concur in your praise, you may insensibly betake your self again to your usual method. Your Acquaintance will become more difficult: to have a bare sight of you will be no small condescension; to speak with you will be a greater: your Frowns will drive away the troublesom, and your Smiles will satisfy the foolish: your familiarity, as unprofitable as it may be, will be taken for a mighty favour; and to conclude all, in a word, you will practise all your vain things with others, and prudently reserve all the solid ones for your self.





THE
TOO RIGID
VIRTUE.

The Virtuous Person speaks.

I Have pass'd, as well as you, thro' all Conditions, and after an exact reflection upon Life, I find but two things that can render it happy : to moderate our Desires, and to make a good use of our Fortune.

They, to whom Reason affords a repose which opinion takes away from us, live free from many misfortunes, and are in a condition of enjoying the most real Blessings. A Man, advanc'd to Greatness, who makes others find their Fortune in his, joins a great Merit to a great Happiness ; he is not the more happy by the wealth he enjoys, than by that which he knows how to give : but he who, like you, courts all mankind for his Interest, and will not suffer any to share advantages with him, makes himself unworthy of common Society, and deserves to be excluded from all Conversation.

Notwithstanding the ill opinion I have entertain'd of you, I cannot but think, that there is a Vanity in the confession of your Vices. Nature has not left it in your power to be so wicked as you would appear to be. A Man is not absolutely ungrateful, with impunity ; he doth not betray, without remorse ;

remorse; nor is he so greedy of another's wealth, and so tenacious of his own, without some shame. And tho you had compounded with your self, free from inward struggles, and secret agitations, you are still to account with the world, whose importunate reproaches, and troublesom accusations, you must be forc'd to endure.

As for the mercenary principle of Interest, you were talking of, 'tis that which renders you contemptible: for story tells us of illustrious Villains, but there never was an illustrious Miser in nature. Greatness of Soul cannot consist with the sordid baseness of Avarice. Besides, what can be more unjust, than to engross that which is the Soul of Commerce and of publick Conveniency, to make no use at all of it? 'Tis no better than fostering of crimes, and to rob the Publick by a continu'd theft, of what was once extorted from private Persons.

Those that take away with Violence, in order to scatter with Profusion, are far more excusable. Their expence is, as it were, a kind of restitution; and the Losers seem to recover some part of their Possessions, when magnificence exposes to their eyes, what force had wrested out of their hands. If an ill reputation is indifferent to you, if injustice hath no influence upon you, yet have, at least, some regard to your own repose.

Since all your desires center in Money, whether it be in your own custody, or another's, it equally disquiets you; you are mad to be disappointed of getting it; what you possess, keeps you in perpetual pain; and if you lose it, you are upon the rack of despair: now, as nothing is so agreeable, as to have Riches, and to make a right use of them; so there is nothing so uneasy, as to be greedy, and too frugal, at the same time.

I confess, your discourse upon Ungrateful Persons, is no less ingenious than true; but in answer to that, it may be replied, that this nicety of yours proceeds more from your observation than your experience. Your mighty precaution against Ingratitude, shews less hatred for it, than aversion for Generosity; and really you don't less avoid the thankful than the ungrateful. Both one and the other receive favours, and your intention is to bestow none; tho, perhaps, you may forgive an injury that is done you, yet you are irreconcilable when you have done a kindness, if it doth not hook in a greater.

Since I am insensibly engag'd in this matter of Benefits, I will carry it on a little farther. There are some men of the humour of Cardinal XIMENEZ, who never agree to what is requested of them, because they would not be prevented, they say, in their designs, nor disturb'd in the order of the good they intend to do. There are men so jealous of the honour of their own actions, that they reject every thing which is suggested them by others. This may come sometimes from a good principle, and be found in lofty Souls; but, for the most part, they are dishonourable Jealousies, and false niceties of Honour, which proceed from a real unwillingness to do kindnesses.

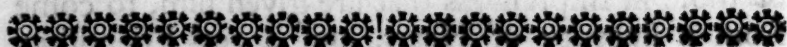
Let us suffer the Miserable to explain their necessities to us, since we do not so much as think of them in our plenty. Let us not be asham'd of owing the thoughts of a good action to another; and let us leave all the avenues free to those that advise us to do well. In the mean time, we should think our selves too easy, did we not shew our selves difficult to be persuaded to what is good, while we receive what is ill with the most implicit credulity, and believe we are masters of our selves. Every one fears the ascendant of his Friends, if they intend to procure a good office from him; every

every one takes a malicious secret, and the artifice of those ill Impressions that are given him, to come from a sincerity of Heart, and a real Friendship. And yet 'tis in this latter case, our caution is warrantable ; 'tis here we may be upon our guard with jealousy ; 'tis here we ought to defend our selves from nice insinuations, which insensibly lead us to do ill,

But to leave discourses that are too general ; what are you the better for making all access to you so difficult ? What signifies that great art, which rules every line of your face ; which governs your *Smiles* and *Frowns* ? To give seasonably, and to refuse with reason, would be more beneficial for others, and more advantageous for your self. There is no great merit in being able to over-reach those who have their dependence upon you. You think you shew the subtlety of your Wit, while you only discover the malice of your Nature.

The great pains you take to delude the expectations of others, will delude the Designer, and come home to your self at last. Every day brings you Riches, and every day retrenches the use of them ; your Wealth increases, and your Senses, which should enjoy it, decay. You acquire things that are wholly foreign to you, and in the mean time lose your self.

What are you the better then for all these fine advantages of nature ? What benefit do you reap by this noble genius of Interest ? You pass your Life amongst superfluous Treasures, while Covetousness doth not allow you the disposal, and Nature deprives you of the enjoyment of them. How unhappy is your fortune, both in relation to your self and others, which persecutes you with inquietudes within, and envy without !



THE SENSE

Of an honest experienc'd Courtier, upon Rigid Virtue, and Base Interest.

I AM concern'd, Sir, that a Virtue too rigid should animate you so strongly against Vice. Have more indulgence, I beseech you, for the vicious, or at least shew a little more gentleness in the manner of your Correction.

I know that Reason was given us to regulate our Morals : but Reason, heretofore savage and austere, was civiliz'd with time, and, at present, preserves very little of its primitive rigour. It wanted austerity, at first, to establish Laws, in order to prevent outrage and violence : it was afterwards soften'd, to introduce Civility into human Society : it became nice and curious in the search of Pleasures, to render life as agreeable, as before it was endeavour'd to be made secure and civil. Thus, Sir, we ought to forget that time, when it was enough to be severe to be thought virtuous, since Politeness, Gallantry, and knowledge of Pleasures, make up a great part of our merit at present.

As for the hatred of villainous Actions, it ought to continue so long as the world does : but give leave to Gentlemen of refin'd palates, to call that Pleasure, which Clowns and ill-bred People call Vice ; and don't make up your Virtue of old musty Notions,

tions, which the primitive Mortals deriv'd from their natural savageness.

In my opinion, you begin but ill with the Courtiers, to preach up incessantly to them the moderation of their Desires, since they particularly value themselves upon their Ambition. You might, perhaps, possess them with a disgust of the World : but while they live at Court, to pretend they should regulate their pretensions, is unpracticable Doctrine. Indeed, when a man has left the Court, he may make a shift to fling up every thing ; but 'tis difficult, while he resides upon the spot, not to desire much ; and, ungentleman-like, to confine himself easily to a small matter.

Among so many different Interests, where your own is concern'd, Ambition and Virtue are not easily reconcil'd. We ought to commend the dexterity of those who know to adjust them together ; we ought to satisfy our selves sometimes with a Good which is not entirely so, and sometimes submit contentedly to a small Ill ; we should not exact a scrupulous Probity, nor cry out that all is lost, when the Corruption is but light.

“ The Gods, says a certain person, never gave
 “ a greater Present to mankind, than the Soul of
 “ the latter CATO ; but, they mistook their
 “ time when they gave it :” his Virtue, which
 would have been justly admir'd in the beginning of the Republick, proved fatal to it towards its end, by being too pure and upright. This just CATO, who might have sav'd his Country, if he could have contented himself with making his Citizens less vicious, destroy'd both that and himself, by endeavouring, to no purpose, to make them virtuous. A man of a less perfect Probity, who could have borne with the Vices of some particular persons, had hinder'd a general oppression. It was necessary to connive at the Irregularities of some Men in power,
 to

to prevent tyranny; for, by that means, the Republick might have been preserved: 'twould have been a corrupt one, I confess; but still it had been a Republick.

Therefore, Sir, let us not so fix our eyes on the World, as it ought to be, as not to be able to suffer it as it is: however, let not this indulgence be shewn to our selves. Let us shew forbearance and temper to others, but be severe to our selves: enemies to Vice in our own Consciences, let us not express any horror for the Vicious, lest we make the whole world our enemy.

For what can you propose to your self, by railing at covetous and ungrateful Men, as so many Monsters that affright you? I know that Ingratitude and Avarice are abominable qualities; but since they are so common in the world, either you must resolve to bear with them, or retire into a Desert, and carry that Virtue along with you into your retirement, which will make you be hated at Court.

If you would reform the ungrateful, persuade Great Men to make a better choice of the Persons whom they intend to oblige. When we find them more nice and careful in the distribution of their favours, those that are oblig'd by them, will make it their particular study to be grateful to their Benefactors. If you would change the humour of a sordid Miser, don't think to effect it by fine speeches: all the Morality in the world may be preach'd to him without effect; represent to him the considerable fortunes which some have rais'd by being at a small expence; possess him with the contempt which a penurious way of living draws upon a man; shew him what advantages persons of the same rank with himself have above him, merely by using a prudent Liberality; and to cure him of this base Interest,

don't

don't be wanting to set before his eyes another that is honourable.

Represent to your Man of Artifice and Self-ends, that all his machines will turn against himself. He would have his Servants faithful to him, yet the example of his own treachery will corrupt them. As he values himself upon his ingenious address, in promising much, and performing nothing; so others will claim a more ingenious right to cheat him, and every one will reward himself at his expence. He entertains his Friends in a scandalous unprofitable familiarity, whereby he gives them an opportunity to spy out his Faults, and to pry into his Affairs, without engaging them, by any tie, to reservedness and secrecy.

As for those premeditated good Offices, that proceed purely from Design and Artifice, as they are only a slight intermission of a knavish conduct, so they produce no more than a light suspension in our Affections; and so soon as the designing Miser returns to his former practice, the world is immediately even with him, and turns to its former aversion.

By the like Reasons you may make him sensible of the advantages he may draw from Virtue, and the prejudice which a fordid pursuit of one's Interest carries with it. This is the niceness I expect in the manner of your Reproofs: for I cannot endure that you should set up for a Philosopher, or a profess'd Casuist, and declaim with a splenetick and supercilious vehemence against Vice. In short, Sir, what can you hope from this fine Harangue? *Every day brings you Riches, and every day retrenches the use of them. Your Wealth increases, and your Senses, that ought to enjoy it, decay; you gain external things, and lose your self.* These People now take the thing quite otherwise; the Money which comes to their Coffers, makes them amends for the day

day that is spent in getting it. The weakness of their Senses is repair'd, as they imagine, by the increase of their Riches; and when they decay in vigour, they think that in some manner they make up the loss, by the improvement of their wealth. Your Wisdom, Sir, is too refin'd for Men that are so corrupted; there is too great a distance between you and them, to be able to meet together. Let us be content to be virtuous, in regard of our selves, and not affect a Probity which will render us troublesome to others: let us court the acquaintance of Men of Integrity, without having any aversion for those that are not so: let us bear with all sorts of Persons, but converse most with those who can best please us.

As there are few Men of so consummate a Virtue, that they can wholly satisfy you; so, on the other hand, there are few so extremely vicious, that you must be forc'd to break off with them. Besides, as we may find defects in the most virtuous Man, when we study him diligently, we may likewise discover some good Qualities in the Man who is least so, if we will be at the pains to examine him. We very rarely find either all Virtue, or all Vice in any Man: the good and the bad qualities are blended together, and a nice discernment may easily distinguish them.

A covetous Man has his friends, and is not wanting to serve them, altho he loves his Money much better than them. If he be a man of interest, he will use it in their behalf, and be glad to employ his diligence, to be excus'd from more substantial offices of friendship.

Another Man will deserve your intimacy by his disinterested Friendship, and agreeable Conversation, tho his laziness, and want of application, may render him unserviceable to you, when he ought to act vigorously in your behalf. I know
some

some Persons of this temper, who are at death's door if they are to stir never so little for you, and whose natural supineness will not let them move one step for you: but at the same time you may command their purses and fortunes, if you'll excuse their application and industry.

As some Persons are too frugal in their nature, but at the same time very agreeable; to take from them all suspicion of expence, frequent their Houses but seldom, and enjoy with pleasure their company in your own.

Another Man is very ready to serve you, that would not acknowledge any obligation you should lay upon him; and being himself not very punctual in point of gratitude, will leave the acknowledgment of the favour he does you to your own discretion.

There are some light-headed, extravagant persons in the world, whose ordinary Acquaintance you ought to avoid; but whose Rashness may be more serviceable to you, upon some occasion or other, than the Prudence of the Wise. Prudent Men will not act so vigorously in your interest, but their Judgments will help to regulate your Conduct. Besides, we are not always the same. We do too much honour to human Nature, when we assign uniformity to it. He that neglects you to-day with coldness, will, by some extraordinary turn of mind, seek out an opportunity to serve you to-morrow. In short, men are changeable, various, made up of good and ill qualities. Let us make all the honest use of them that we can, and not avoid Men for their defects, who might with as much reason, shun us for ours.

It is time to sum up, in a few words, all that may be said upon opinions so opposite: they have this common in their opposition, that they keep us too devoted to our selves, tho in a different manner.

The one, thro' fondness of a Virtue, which is only beneficial to our selves, would carry us into a Desert, and deter us from the common offices of a civil life; the other brings us into Society, that we may make our own private advantage of the publick. If we follow the first, every thing will be Vice with us, because we frame to our selves an idea of Virtue that the World never practis'd. If we will be govern'd by the latter, there will be no more Faith, nor Honour, nor Integrity left amongst us. We must live amongst Men, as if we were not of the same Species; indifferent to their Merit, exempt from their Passions, insensible of their Pleasures, and studious of nothing but our own Interest.

On one side, the Speculations are too pure and refin'd; on the other, too base and corrupted: but we can better make shift without a good, which produces not an unprofitable virtue, than suffer the effects of so dangerous a Corruption.



A L E T T E R

T O T H E

C O U N T D E L I O N N E.

S I R,

PERHAPS you are not at Paris: perhaps you are; and in this last case, your silence may be rather the effect of your forgetfulness, than of your absence. But, suppose it were, I am too much beholden to you for your past services, to
com-

complain of your present indifference. I don't inquire after you, to fatigue you for an Answer, or renew a Correspondence that would rob you of some hours, which you know how to bestow to better purpose. But, Sir, you still owe something to our Friendship, and you will discharge the obligation, if you can find some way, either by your self, or any body else, to let me know that you are in health. This piece of news will give me a joy, in which you are more concern'd than any other; and if you were of my temper, you would be of my opinion, that to be well is better than to command the whole world. No Treasures are worth one year's Health.

Pardon, Sir, the chat of an infirm man, who enjoying a quarter of an hour's health, thinks no other subject so proper to be talk'd on. You were, perhaps, of my humour, when you enjoy'd some ease of the pains occasion'd by your broken arm, and your other wounds. Now you are perfectly cur'd, relish the pleasure of it, and let me make melancholy reflections on the Song you have taught me :

*But oh ! when Age benums our veins,
No longer sprightly Joy remains !*

If there be any Airs as agreeable as this in the Musick of the *Feast of Versailles*, I desire you to send them me prick'd, and you will oblige one who is more than ever, &c.

TO THE SAME.

I Receiv'd, just now, the Letter you have done me the honour to write me, with the Airs you have sent me. I should have a thousand thanks

to return you; but knowing, as I do, your inclination to oblige me, you will, I hope, allow me to be somewhat slow in making acknowledgments; for the continual repetition of favours might fatigue so tender a gratitude as mine. Be persuaded, however, that I have a due sense of your kindness; and that you may more absolutely dispose of me, than of any man you know.

I never was more surpriz'd in my life, than to see expos'd to sale here, three little Books that are father'd upon me, and are now printing at Amsterdam. It is about twenty years since I made some short Discourses on the Reflections that are contain'd in one of those little Books¹; but know not who got them from me.

Continue, I beseech you, to love me always: and be persuaded, that you'll never have a surer friend, or one more passionate to serve you.

When there is something curious and diverting, I intreat you to send it me: particularly Monsieur ARNAUD'S *Answer* to Monsieur CLAUDE², as soon as 'tis printed; with Mr. CLAUDE'S *Reply*, which undoubtedly will soon follow: *habita ratione* of Postage, that is, any other way than by the Post.

Do not forbear obliging me: for let my gratitude be never so tender, yet it will last as long as my self; nor shall I ever forget what you do for my Interest.

T O

¹ See Vol. I. pag. 26. and 31.

² A Book intitled, *La Perpetuité de la Foy de l'Eglise Catholique touchant l'Eucharistie, defendue contre le Livre du Sieur Claude Ministre de Charenton. M. Claude soon answer'd that Book, and the Jansenists never made but a general Reply to that Work. See M. Bayle's Dictionary, in the Articles of Messieurs Arnaud and Claude.*

TO THE SAME.

IF I consulted nothing but discretion, I might save you the trouble of receiving some of my Letters, and the fatigue of an Answer, which your civility will incline you to write ; but as 'tis my temper to consult my own satisfaction as much as yours, you will not take it ill if I enjoy that which I find in entertaining you ; and all that I can do for you, Sir, is not to abuse it, by too frequent an enjoyment. If you knew what a great trouble it is to me to forbear it, you would easily forgive what I do, for the violence I undergo in not doing more.

I am return'd to a Court^r, after having liv'd four years in a Republick, without either Pleasure or Entertainment ; for I think the Hague is the true seat of Indolence. I know not how I put new life into my sentiments : but, however, the fancy took me to feel something more quick and lively ; and a fond imagination that I might return to France, made me pitch upon London, as a medium between the French Courtiers, and the Dutch Burgomasters. Hitherto, I was contented to take up with the Heaviness, or to speak more obligingly, the Gravity of the Gentlemen of Holland : but as I do not find my self much nearer France than I was, so the vivacity I have studied, is very injurious to my repose ; since it draws me back from Indolence, without advancing me to Pleasure. That I mean, which I fancied to my self in seeing you at Paris : for, to speak the truth, I find here a great deal, amongst abundance of polite and well-bred men.

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Your

^{*} M. De St. Evremond wrote this Letter, immediately upon his return to England, in the year 1670.

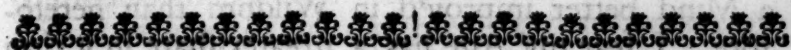
Your Friend the Duke of BUCKINGHAM has told me, that I was very much beholden to M. DE LIONNE the Minister: to whom I intreat you to return a thousand thanks from me. I am one of his Admirers; but my admiration is not worth the pains he has taken: and indeed, 'twas only his generosity that prompted him to act so nobly. Pray, be your self so generous, as now and then to remember your most humble and most obedient Servant.

TO THE SAME.

ALTHO I should not regret Monsieur DE LIONNE the Minister out of my own Interest; yet out of mere regard to you, I would have receiv'd the news of his Death with great Sorrow¹. I am inform'd he is generally lamented at Paris; and I can assure you, that the Foreigners honour his memory with the same sentiments that the French entertain of him. Whatever was the merit of the great Ministers of our State, foreign Nations did ever rejoice at their Death; and 'twas a long time before they could pass from the hatred of their Persons, to the veneration of their Virtues. Monsieur DE LIONNE is the only man whose Death was apprehended, and who has made the world sensible of their Loss, at the same instant he died. To enlarge on the Death of Great Men, is to add grief and affliction to Death herself: she has no need of such helps to be ghastly; which makes me break off that Discourse, to assure, that no man can be more truly than I am, &c.

TO

¹ *Hugues de Lionne, Marquis de Fresne and de Berny, Minister and Secretary of State, dyed in the year 1671.*



TO THE
MARESCHAL DE CREQUI,

*Who ask'd the temper of my Mind,
and my thoughts of all things, in my
old Age.*

WHEN we are young, the popular Opinion sways us, and we are more solicitous to gain the esteem of others than of our selves. But when arriv'd to old Age, we are apt to have a less value for foreign things; and are most taken up with our selves, when we are ready to be wanting to our selves. It is with Life as with our other Possessions: all is wasted when we think our stock greatest; and we are seldom frugal, but when there remains little to be managed. Hence we see young men squander (as it were) their being, in which they think they have a long term of years to come: but we become more dear to our selves, as we are nearest losing our selves. Heretofore my roving, wandring fancy, rambled after all manner of foreign objects: at present my mind contracts it self to the body, and unites more straitly with it: not, indeed, out of any sense of pleasure from such an alliance, but out of necessity of the mutual succour and assistance, which they endeavour to afford one another.

In this languishing condition, I yet retain some Pleasures; but I have lost all sense of Vice, without knowing whether this change be owing to the in-

firmity of a decay'd Body, or the moderation of a Mind better improv'd in Wisdom than heretofore. I fear my Age has a greater share in it than my Virtue ; and that I have more reason to complain, than brag of the obedience of my Inclinations. And, indeed, it were preposterous for me to ascribe to my Reason the power of subjecting my Desires, if they are too weak to revolt : so that what Wisdom soever men at my years may boast of, it is hard to distinguish whether those Passions, we now no longer feel, be subdued or extinguish'd.

Whatever it be, when our senses are no longer affected by external objects, nor our souls mov'd by their impressions, it is properly no more than a state of Indolence : yet is not this Indolence without its Charms. For to think himself exempt from all uneasiness, is enough to give joy to a reasonable man. The enjoyment of Pleasures is not always required : the privation of Pain well managed, renders our condition sufficiently happy.

When any misfortune besel me, I was naturally little sensible of it, without dashing this happy constitution with any thoughts of Constancy : for Constancy is only dwelling longer upon our miseries. It appears the most amiable Virtue in the world to those who are under no afflictions ; but is truly an additional torment to such as suffer. Resistance only frets us ; and instead of easing the first Pain, begets a second : without resistance we suffer only the Evils inflicted on us ; with it, our own improvements too. For this reason, under my present Misfortunes, I resign all to nature ; and reserve my Prudence for such a juncture of time, as I have nothing to suffer. Then by reflecting upon my own Indolence, I am pleas'd with the Pains I endure not ; and by this means make happy the most common state of Life.

Expe-

Experience is form'd with Age ; and Wisdom is commonly the result of Experience. But when this Virtue is ascrib'd to old men, it does not follow that they are always masters of it. This is certain, that they have always the liberty to be wise ; and to knock off decently those fetters, which prejudice has put upon the world. They only are allow'd to take things for what they really are. Reason has prevail'd in almost all the first Institutions ; but it has been afterwards almost quite over-run by Fancy. Now Age only has the power to drive out the one from what she had usurp'd, and to restore the other to what she had lost.

For my part, I observe religiously all real Duties. The imaginary I decline or admit, as I like or dislike them. For in things to which I am not oblig'd, I think it equal Wisdom to reject what does not please me, or to accept what does. Every day frees me from one link at least of the chain, nor is it less for the advantage of those from whom I disengage my self, than me who regain my Liberty. They are as great gainers in the loss of a useless man, as I should have been a loser, by idly devoting my self any longer to them.

Of all ties, that of Friendship is the only one that is endearing to me ; and were it not for the disgrace of having my Affection slighted, I cou'd love merely for the pleasure of loving ; even where I should not be belov'd again. In Love ill plac'd, the sentiments of Amity entertain us purely by their own agreeable sweetness : but we ought to divest our selves of a just hatred, for the interest of our own quiet. Happy were that mind which could entirely resist some Passions, and only unbend it self to some others. It would then be void of Fear, Sadness, Hatred, or Jealousy. It wou'd desire, without Violence ; hope, without Uneasiness ; and enjoy, without Transport.

The state of Virtue is not a state of Indolence. We suffer in it, a perpetual conflict betwixt Duty and Inclination. Sometimes we admit what's shocking to us, and sometimes oppose what we like ; being generally under a Constraint, both in what we do, and in what we forbear. The state of Wisdom is sweet and calm : it reigns peaceably over our movements, being only to govern well as Subjects, what Virtue was to combat as Enemies.

I can say one thing of my self, as extraordinary as true, *viz.* that I never felt in my self any conflict between Passion and Reason. My Passion never oppos'd what I resolv'd out of Duty ; and my Reason readily comply'd with what a sense of Pleasure inclin'd me to. I don't aim at praise on account of this easy agreement ; on the contrary, I confess I have often been the more vicious for it. Not out of any perverse disposition to Evil, but because the Vice was entertain'd as a Pleasure, instead of appearing as a Crime.

It is certain, the nature of things is much better discovered by Reflection on them when past, than by their impressions when felt. Besides, the great commerce with the world, hinders all attention in youth. What we see in others, hinders us from examining well our selves. Crouds please us at an age, when we love (as one may say) to diffuse our selves. Multitudes grow troublesom at another, when we naturally return to our selves ; or, at most, to a few Friends, who are most strictly united to us.

'Tis this humour, that insensibly withdraws us from Courts. We begin thro' that to seek some medium between assiduous attendance and retirement. We grow afterwards asham'd to shew an old face among young fellows, who, instead of taking our Gravity for Wisdom, laugh at us for appearing in publick Places, where nothing but Gallantry

lantry and Gaity is to be seen. Let us not flatter our selves with our judgment: a brisk buffoonry will run it down; and the false glittering of a youthful fancy, will turn to ridicule, the most delicate of our Conversations. If we have wit, let us make a better use of it in private Companies; for in a croud the qualities of the mind maintain themselves but ill, against the advantages of the body.

This justice which we are oblig'd to do our selves, ought not to make us unjust to the young men. We ought not superciliously to cry up our own times, or with moroseness perpetually run down the present, which is favourable to them. Let us not rail at Pleasures when we are past them, or censure Diversions, whose only crime is our incapacity to enjoy them.

Our Judgments ought to be always the same. We may live, but must not judge by humour. There is in mine something singular, which makes me attend more the trouble, than the pomp of Magnificence. Shows, Feasts, and great Assemblies, invite me to the sight of them: but the inconveniencies I must suffer deter me. The elegant Harmony of Consorts, engages not me so much, as the difficulty of adjusting them tires me. Plenty disgusts me at meals; and Rarities seem to be an affected curiosity. My fancy cannot recommend any thing to my palate by the scarcity. But I am for the choice of things easily to be had, that I may preserve a Delicacy independent upon Fancy,

Of

*Of Reading, and the Choice of
Books.*

I AM as fond of reading as ever, because it depends more particularly on the mind, which decays not like the senses : but, in truth, I seek in Books my Pleasure rather than my Instruction. As I have less time for practice, I have less curiosity to learn. I have more need of a stock of life, than of methods of living ; and the little that remains, is better entertain'd and cherish'd by things agreeable, than instructive. The Latin Authors afford me the most, and I read whatever I think fine, a thousand times over without being cloy'd.

A nice choice has confin'd me to a few Books, in which I seek rather sound than fine Wit ; and the true Taste (to use a Spanish Expression) is generally found in the writings of considerable men. I am pleas'd to discover in TULLY's *Epistles*, both his own Character, and that of those Persons of Quality that wrote to him. As for TULLY himself, he never divests himself of his Rhetorick ; and the least recommendation to his most intimate friend, is as artificially insinuated, as if he were to preposess a stranger in an affair of the greatest consequence in the world. The *Letters* of the rest have not those turns : but in my mind, they have more good sense than his ; and this makes me judge very advantageously of the great and general abilities of the Romans at that time.

Our Authors perpetually cry up the age of AUGUSTUS, upon the account of VIRGIL and HORACE ; and perhaps more yet upon the score of MECENAS, who encouraged men of Learning,
than

than for those men of learning themselves. It is certain, nevertheless, that their Parts, as well as Courages, began at that time to decay. Greatness of soul was converted to circumspect Conduct, and found Discourse to polite Conversation: and if we consider what remains of MECENAS, I know not whether he had not something effeminate, which was made to pass for delicate. MECENAS was AUGUSTUS's great Favourite; the man that pleas'd, and whom all the polite and sprightly wits endeavour'd to please: now is it not likely that his Judgment over-rul'd the rest, that they affected his manner, and aped, as much as they cou'd, his character?

AUGUSTUS himself leaves us no great idea of his Latinity. What we see of TERENCE; what was reported at Rome of the politeness of SCIPIO and LELIUS; the remains of CESAR; and what we have of CICERO, with the complaint of this last for the loss of what he calls *sales, lepores, venustates, urbanitas, amœnitas, festivitas, jucunditas*; all these together, I say, make me believe, upon better consideration, that we must pitch on some other time than that of AUGUSTUS, to find the sound and agreeable Wit of the Romans, as well as the pure and natural graces of their tongue.

It may be said, that HORACE had a very nice palate in all these matters; which persuades me, that the rest of his Cotemporaries had not. For the nicety of his relish consisted chiefly in finding the ridicule of others. Were it not for the impertinencies, false manners, and affectations which he laugh'd at, his sense wou'd not at this very day appear so very just.

Of Poetry.

I OWN the Augustan age to have been that of excellent Poets; but it follows not, that it was that of sound Judgment. Poetry requires a peculiar Genius, that agrees not overmuch with good sense. It is sometimes the language of Gods, sometimes of Buffoons; rarely that of a Gentleman. It delights in figures and fictions, always beside the reality of things, tho it be that only, that can satisfy a sound Understanding.

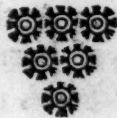
Not but that there is something noble in making agreeable Verses; but we must have a great command of our genius, otherwise the mind is possess'd with something foreign, which hinders it from the free management of it self. *He's a Blockhead, says the Spaniard, that can't make two Verses, and a Fool that makes four.* I own, if this Maxim prevail'd over all the world, we should want a thousand fine works, the reading of which gives us a very delicate pleasure; but this saying respects men of business, rather than profess'd Poets. Besides, those that are capacitated for such great performances, will not resist the force of their Genius, for what I can say; and it is certain, that amongst Authors, those only will write few Verses, who find themselves more cramp'd by their own barrenness, than by my reasons.

Excellent Poets are as requisite for our entertainment, as great Mathematicians for our use: but it is sufficient for us to be acquainted with their works, and not to engage our selves in the solitary Enthusiasm of the one, or to exhaust our spirits in Meditation, like the other,

Comick

Comick Poets are of all most proper for the converse of the world : for they make it their business to draw to the life what passes in it, and to express the sentiments and passions of Men. How new a turn soever may be given to old thoughts, that sort of Poetry is very tedious which is fill'd with similes of the *Morning, Sun, Moon, and Stars.* Our Descriptions of a calm, and a tempestuous Sea, represent nothing which the Antients have not express'd much better. Now a-days we have not only the same Ideas, but the very same Expressions, and Rhymes. I never hear of the harmony of Birds, but I prepare my self for purling Streams ; the Shepherdesses are always lolling upon Fern, and you may sooner find a Grove without a Shade in its proper seat, than in our Verses. This must necessarily at length be very tedious : which cannot happen in Comedy, where with pleasure we see those things represented, which we may perform, and where we feel motions like those we see express'd.

A Tale of Woods, Rivers, Meadows, Fields, and Gardens, makes but a very languishing impression upon us, unless their beauties be wholly new : but what concerns Humanity, its inclinations, tendernesses, and affections, finds something in the inmost recesses of our souls prepar'd to receive it : the same nature produces and receives 'em, and they are easily transfus'd from the Actors to the Spectators.



*Of some Spanish, Italian, and
French Books.*

THE delicacy of Love soothes me, and its tenderness touches me; and as in Spain they love the best of any Country in the world, I am never weary of reading in their Authors amorous Adventures. I am more affected with the passion of one of their Lovers, than I should be with my own, were I yet capable of any. The very imagination of those Amours raises in me certain motions for the Gallant, which I could never feel for my self.

There is, perhaps, as much Wit in the other writings of that Nation, as in ours; but it is a kind of wit that gives no satisfaction, except that of CERVANTES in *Don Quixot*, which I could read all my life, without being disgusted one single moment. Of all the Books I ever read, *Don Quixot* is that of which I shou'd be most ambitious to have been the Author. Nothing, in my opinion, can contribute more to the forming in us a true taste of every thing. I wonder how CERVANTES cou'd, as it were out of the mouth of one of the greatest Fools in the world, shew himself master of all the understanding and knowledge imaginable. I admire the variety of his Characters, which are of the most uncommon stamp in the world, and at the same time the most natural. QUEVEDO, indeed, appears a very ingenious Author; but I esteem him more for his thought of burning all his own Books when he read *Don Quixot*, than for having been able to compose 'em.

I am not acquainted enough with Italian Poetry to taste its delicacy, or admire its graces and beauties: I meet with some Histories in that tongue above all the Moderns; and some Treatises of Politicks, even above what the Antients have written. As for the Morality of the Italians, it is full of *Concetti*, or pointed Witticisms, which rather shew a fancy that endeavours to glitter, than a solid sense founded on deep reflections.

I have a great curiosity for every thing that is fine in French; and am very much distast'd at a thousand Authors, who seem only to have written for the reputation of being Authors. I read not for the credit of having read abundance; which ties me up to certain Books, where I am assur'd to meet satisfaction.

MONTAIGNE'S *Essays*, MALHERBE'S *Poems*, CORNEILLE'S *Tragedies*, and VOITURE'S *Works*, have established to themselves, as it were, a title to please me during life. MONTAIGNE has not the same success with others, thro' the whole course of their lives. As he particularly lays open Men, the young and the old are pleas'd to see themselves in him, by the resemblance of their thoughts. The space intermediate to these Ages, takes 'em off from Nature to other Professions; and then they find less in MONTAIGNE that fits 'em. The Art Military employs the General; Politicks the Statesman; Divinity the Churchman; and Law the Judge. MONTAIGNE returns upon us, when Nature has brought us back again to our selves; and when an advanc'd age, in which we truly feel what we are, recalls the Prince as well as his meanest Subjects, from a concern for his Dignity, to the more near and sensible concern for his Person.

I write not this out of any impulse of Vanity, which prompts men to make their fancies publick. I feel my very soul (if I may so speak) in what I say; and understand my self better by expressing the Notion I have form'd of my self, than I could by private thoughts and inward reflections. The idea a man has of himself by a bare attention to internal meditations, is always a little confus'd. The Image which is outwardly express'd, is much more exact, and gives us a much truer judgment of our selves, when it is again submitted to the examination of the mind, after having been laid before our eyes. Besides, the flattering opinion of our own merit, loses half its charms, as soon as it comes into the light; and the complacency of self-love insensibly vanishing, leaves behind it only a disgust of its sweetness, and shame for a vanity as foolishly entertain'd, as judiciously quitted.

To equal MALHERBE to the Antients, I require nothing finer than his own Compositions. I wou'd only strike out of his Works what is not worthy of him. It were injustice to make him yield to any one: but it will suffice for the honour of our own Judgments, if we make him give place to himself.

We may say the same of CORNEILLE'. He would be above all the Tragedians of Antiquity, if he were not in some of his Pieces much below himself. He is so admirable in what is fine, that he takes away all patience for what is indifferent. What in him is not excellent, methinks is naught; not that it is really so, but because it wants the perfection of the rest. It is not enough for him to please us lightly, he's bound to touch us to the very quick. Some Authors may be allow'd simply to move us: and these emotions are pleasing enough,
when

when we have nothing else in view, than to be tenderly affected : but with CORNEILLE our souls are prepar'd for Raptures ; and if they be not transported, they are left in a condition more uneasy than languor. It is, I confess, difficult always to charm ; very hard at pleasure to raise a mind from its temper, and, as it were, to unhinge a Soul : but CORNEILLE by having done it so often, has laid upon himself an obligation to do it always. Let him expunge what is not noble enough for him, and he will leave us in a full admiration of those Beauties which no one can parallel.

I should not excuse VOITURE for a great many of his *Letters*, which he ought to have suppress'd, had himself been the publisher² : but he was like some Fathers, equally kind and prudent, who have a natural affection for their Children, and, in secret, cherish those that want worth, thereby to avoid exposing their judgments to the publick by their indulgence. He might have shew'd all his fondness to some of his Works : for there is something in 'em so ingenious, so polite, so fine, and so agreeable, that it takes away all relish of the *Sales Attici*, and the *Roman Urbanities* ; eclipses quite thro' the Wit of the Italians and the Gallantry of the Spaniards.

We have in French some particular Pieces of admirable beauty ; such are the *Funeral Orations* of the Queen of England, and that of the Duchess of Orleans by the Bishop of Condom³. There is a certain Spirit diffus'd thro' those discourses, which gives us as great an opinion of the Author before he is known, as of his work after 'tis read. His Character is impress'd on all that he says ; so that altho

Vol. II.

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² *Voiture's Works* were publish'd after his death, by his Nephew Pinchène, assisted by Conrart and Chapelain.

³ *James Benigne Bossuet*, first Bishop of Condom, and then of Meaux. He died the twelfth of August N. S. 1704.

I never saw him, I pass easily from the admiration of his Discourse to that of his Person.

Of Conversation.

HOW great soever the pleasure of Reading is to me, yet that of Conversation will ever most sensibly affect me. The acquaintance of the Ladies would afford me the sweetest, if the satisfaction we find in conversing with the lovely, did not put us to the trouble of being upon our guard against their Charms. Yet this is a violence I rarely suffer: as my Age renders me unacceptable, my Experience makes me nice; and if they can't be pleas'd with me, I am, by way of return, as hardly satisfy'd with them. There are some, indeed, whose Merits make a considerable impression on my mind, but their Beauty has little influence on my heart: and if I am at any time surprized by it, I presently reduce my Passion to a pleasing reasonable Friendship, that has none of the uneasiness of Love.

The first merit with the Ladies is to be in love with them; the next, the being the Confident of their inclinations; the third, the ingenious improving and setting off all that is amiable in them: if nothing will win their hearts, we may, at least, gain upon their minds by praise; for next to the Lover, to whom all must yield, he pleases 'em most, who affords 'em means of being better pleas'd with themselves. When you converse with them, take great care never to leave 'em in Indifference; they are, from their souls, averse to such coldness: wherefore, either make your self belov'd, or indulge their Passions, or make 'em find themselves more lovely. For, after all, Love of some sort or
other

other they must have ; their hearts are never void of that passion. Direct a poor heart how to employ it.

'Tis true, some of 'em can have esteem, and even tenderness without love ; and others there are as capable of secrecy as the most trusty of our friends. I know some that have no less Wit and Discretion, than Charms and Beauty : but those are rarities, that nature wantonly bestows on the world, either by design or caprice ; and we can draw no consequences in favour of the generality from things so particular, and from qualities so uncommon. Women so extraordinary seem to have borrow'd the merit of Men ; and, perhaps, 'tis a kind of revolt from their sex, to shake off the natural conditions of it for the real advantages of ours.

I confess, I have formerly been more difficult in the choice of the Men with whom I convers'd, than at present I am ; and I think my self not so much a loser in point of Delicacy, as a gainer in point of Sense. I then sought for men that could please me in every thing, I now seek every thing that may please me in any man. A man in all respects agreeable, is too great a rarity, and it is no wisdom to hunt for what we are hardly ever like to find. That delicacy of Pleasure, which our Imagination paints to us, is what we seldom enjoy ; the sickly nice fancy gives us a disrelish of those things which we might possess, during the whole course of our lives. Not that, to say truth, it is impossible to find such Jewels ; but it is very rarely that Nature forms 'em, and that Fortune favours us with 'em. My good stars made me know one of this rank in France, and another of equal merit in a foreign Country, who was the whole delight of my life. Death has robb'd me of this treasure, and I can never think on that cruel day on which my Lord D'AUBIGNY died, but I may say, with a true and sensible regret,

*Quem semper acerbum,
Semper honoratum, sic Dii voluistis, habebo* ⁴.

In the measures you will take for Society, you must reckon not to find good things separately. Expect to meet solidity with prolixity; agreeableness with want of sense; and science with ridicule. You will find these Qualities promiscuously blended, not only among those men whom we may, at pleasure, make choice of, or avoid, but even among those whom our interest, or other ties as obligatory shall bind you to. I have convers'd with a Man of the brightest natural parts in the world, who being sometimes weary of the happy facility of his Genius, engag'd in arguments of Science and Religion, in which he betray'd a ridiculous ignorance. I know one of the most learned men in Europe ⁵, of whom one may learn a thousand things, curious or profound; in whom, nevertheless, you will find a foolish credulity in every thing extraordinary, fabulous, or exceeding belief.

That great master of the Stage, to whom the Romans are more beholden for the beauty of their sentiments, than to their own wit or virtue; CORNEILLE, who sufficiently discovers himself without being named, becomes an ordinary man when he speaks for himself. He dares say any thing for a Greek or a Roman: a Frenchman or Spaniard abates his Courage; and when he speaks for him, he is quite dispirited. He racks his Imagination for all that is noble to adorn his old Heroes, and you would say, that he debarr'd himself the advantage of his own wealth, as if he were not worthy the use of it.

If

⁴ *Virgil. Æneid. Lib. V. v. 49, 50.*

⁵ *Dr. Isaac Vossius.*

If you know the world perfectly, you will find in it abundance of men valuable for their Talents, and as contemptible for their Failings. Expect not they should always exert their abilities, and discreetly cover their infirmities. You shall see them often slight their Virtues, and fondly indulge their Defects. It rests upon your judgment to make a better choice than themselves, and by your address, to draw from them that worth, which they could not easily communicate.

For these ten years past, which I have spent in foreign Countries, I have found as much Pleasure, and been as happy in the enjoyment of Conversation, as if I had been all the time in France. I have met with persons of as great worth as quality, whose Society has been the greatest comfort of my life. I have known men as witty as any I have ever seen, who have join'd the Pleasure of their Friendship, to that of their Company. I have known some Ambassadors of such bright parts, that they seem'd to me to make a considerable loss, whenever the duty of their Character suspended the exercise of their private excellencies.

I formerly thought that there were no well-bred and polite men but in our Court; that the effeminacy of warmer Climates, and a kind of barbarity in the colder, hinder'd the Natives from being rais'd to this pitch, except very rarely. But experience has, at length, convinc'd me, that there are such every where; and if I have not discover'd it soon enough, it is because it is difficult for a French Man to relish any but those of his own Country. Every Nation has its Excellence, with a certain turn proper and peculiar to its Genius. My Judgment, too much wedded to our own air, rejected as faulty what was foreign to us. Because we see them imitate us in the fashion of things exterior, we wou'd impose upon them the imita-

tion of us, even in the dress of Virtue too. In truth, the grounds of any essential Quality, are every where the same : but we endeavour to fit the extrinicks to our humour ; and those among us that pay the greatest deference to Reason, must have with it something to gratify their fancies. To speak ingenuously, the difference I find between us and others, in the air, or manner that distinguishes Nations, is, that ours is industriously affected, and that of other Nations impress'd by nature, as it were in an indelible Character.

In all my life, I have never known but two persons that were universally taking, and those two differently. The one had agreeable qualities of all sorts ; for the ordinary sort of Men, for the Humourists, and even for the Fantastical ; and he seem'd to have in his nature wherewith to please every body. The other had so many rare accomplishments, that he might assure himself of esteem where ever Virtue is rever'd. The first was insinuating, and never fail'd to gain the Affections. The second was somewhat proud, but yet commanded Esteem. To complete this difference, a man gave himself up with pleasure to the insinuations of the former, and submitted oftentimes, tho with reluctance, to the worth of the latter. I had a strict Friendship with them both, and can say, that I never saw any thing in the one, but what was agreeable ; or in the other, but what deserv'd esteem.

Of Literature and the Civil Law.

WHEN I am depriv'd of the conversation of the Men of the World, I have recourse to the Learned ; and if I meet with men skill'd in
polite

polite Literature, I think my self no great loser by exchanging the delicacy of the present, for that of past ages. But we rarely meet with persons that have a true Judgment : which, in many Scholars, renders Literature a very tiresome knowledge. Of all the men I ever knew, Antiquity is the most indebted to Mr. WALLER : he lends it his beautiful Imagination, and his nice and delicate Judgment ; so that he enters into the genius of the Antients, not only to understand rightly what they thought, but still to embellish their thoughts.

I have seen within a few years, abundance of Criticks, and but few good Judges. Now, I don't affect that sort of learned men, who rack their brains to restore a Reading, which is not mended by the restitution. The whole mystery of their Learning lies in what we might as well be ignorant of, and they are absolute strangers to what's really worth knowing. As they are incapable of having nice Sentiments and Thoughts, so 'tis impossible for them to enter into the delicacy of a Sentiment, or the fineness of a Thought. They may succeed well enough in expounding Grammarians, who applied themselves to the same study, and whose genius was the same : but they can never hit that of a polite, well-bred man among the Antients, because theirs is diametrically opposite to it. In History, they neither mind Men nor Affairs : they lay the whole stress on Chronology ; and for the date of a Consul's Death, will neglect the knowledge of his Character, and of the transactions during his Consulship. TULLY, with them, will never be any more than a declaimer of *Orations* ; or CESAR than a Writer of *Commentaries* : the Consul and the General escape their notice ; the Spirit that animates their Works is unperceiv'd ; and the principal matters they treat of, unknown.

I own I value infinitely a *Criticism on the Sense*, if the expression may be allow'd. Such is the excellent work of MACHIAVEL upon the *Decades* of LIVY; and such would be the reflections of Monsieur DE ROHAN upon CESAR's *Commentaries*, had he penetrated deeper into his Designs, and expos'd to a clearer light the secret springs of his Conduct. I must own nevertheless, that he has equall'd the penetration of MACHIAVEL in his Remarks upon the clemency of CESAR in the Civil Wars. But we may see, that his own experience of such Wars, furnish'd him with abundance of hints for those judicious Observations.

Next to the study of polite Learning (for which I have a more particular affection) I love the science of those great Lawyers and Civilians, who might themselves be Legislators; who re-ascend to that original Justice that settled human Society; who know what Liberty nature allows in establish'd Governments; and how far the natural liberty of private Persons is restrain'd for the publick good by necessary Politicks. These instructions might be found in the conversation of M. SLUSE⁶, with as much pleasure as profit. From HOBBS, that great Genius of England, we might also receive these noble lights; tho with less exactness, because he carries some things too far, and is altogether upon extremes in others.

Were GROTIUS yet alive, all things might be learned of that universal Scholar, who is yet more valuable for his Reasonings than for his Learning. Now he is dead, his Writings resolve the most important difficulties; and were Justice only regarded, they might be a standing rule to all Nations in points of War and Peace. His Book, *De Jure*

⁶ A Canon of St. Lambert at Liege; and Brother to M. Sluse, Secretary of the briefs to the Pope, and afterwards a Cardinal.

Jure Belli & Pacis, ought to be the chief study of sovereign Princes, their Ministers, and generally of all such as have any share in the Government of the People.

Nay, even the knowledge of that Law which descends to the affairs of private Men, ought not to be slighted. But this is left to the care of the Gentlemen of the Gown, and denied to Princes as a thing below them; tho every moment of their Reign, they give Decrees, or issue out Warrants that extend to the Fortunes, Liberties, and Lives of their Subjects. They are only entertain'd with harangues about Valour, which is only an instrument of Destruction; and Discourses of Liberality, which is but a more regular method of squandering, unless they be bounded by Justice. 'Tis true, the Doctrine of every Virtue ought to be suited to the necessities of every one's temper: to infuse liberality into the Covetous, to excite the Unactive with the thirst of Glory, and curb, as much as is possible, the Ambitious with the reins of Justice. But amongst all the diversity of tempers, Justice is still most requisite; for it keeps up order as well in him that does it, as in them to whom it is done. Nor is this a constraint that limits the Power of a Prince; for in doing it to others, he learns to do it to himself; and so it is in him a voluntary act, tho we necessarily receive it from his Power.

I read not an History of any Prince better educated than CYRUS the Great. They were not contented exactly to inform him what Justice was in all respects, but they made him put their Instructions in practice, as often as occasion offer'd; so that they did, at the same time, imprint the notions of Justice on his mind, and establish an habit of being just in his Soul. The education of ALEXANDER was of somewhat too large an extent:

tent : he was taught the knowledge of every thing in nature, but himself. His Ambition went afterwards as far as his Learning ; and having endeavour'd to know all, he grew desirous to conquer all. But he had little or no method in his Conquests, and abundance of irregularity in his Life ; for want of knowing what he ow'd to the publick, to private men, and to himself.

No men whatsoever can take too effectual a care to be just, for they have naturally too strong a bias the contrary way. Justice is the foundation and the fence of all Society ; without it we should still be Savages and Vagabonds ; and our impetuosity would soon reduce us to our primitive confusion, out of which we are happily extricated. Yet instead of chearfully acknowledging the benefit, we find some reluctance in submitting to that happy subjection it keeps us in, and still long after that fatal Liberty which would prove the unhappiness of our Lives.

When the Scripture tells us that the Just are few, it means not, in my opinion, that no men are inclin'd to good Works : but it seems to intimate, how little they are inclin'd to act as they should, out of a principle of Justice. And indeed, were mens good actions examin'd, they would most of them be found to have their source from the consideration of some other Virtues. Good Nature, Friendship, and Benevolence, are the ordinary springs from whence they flow : Charity relieves our neighbours wants, Liberality bestows, and Generosity obliges : Justice, which ought to partake in all, is laid aside as burdensome ; and necessity alone gives it a share in our actions. Nature endeavours to find a kind of Self-complacency in those first Virtues, where we act upon pleasing motives : but in this she finds a secret violence, where another's right extorts from us what we owe, and

we rather acquit our selves of our own Obligations, than lay any upon them by our Beneficence.

It is a secret aversion to Justice that makes us fonder of giving than returning, of obliging than acknowledging. Thus we see the most liberal, generous men, are not usually the most just. Justice includes a regularity that lays a constraint upon them, as being founded on a constant order of Reason, opposite to those natural impulses, which are the hinges upon which Liberality almost always moves. There is, I know not what heroical in great Liberality, as well as in great Valour; and there is a great analogy between those two Virtues; the one raising the Soul above the consideration of Wealth, and the other pushing on Courage beyond a concern for Life. But with all these gay and generous Motives, without good Conduct, the one becomes ruinous, and the other fatal.

Those whom cross accidents of Fortune have undone, are pitied by all the world, because it is a misfortune attending the condition of humanity, to which every body is liable: those that are reduc'd to Misery by vain profusion, raise more contempt than commiseration; because it is the effect of a private Folly, from which every man has the good conceit to think himself free. Add to this, that nature always suffers a little by compassion, and to relieve her self of an uneasy thought, she contemplates the folly of the Prodigal, instead of resting upon the prospect of the Beggar. All things consider'd, it is enough for private men to be beneficent; nor ought this to proceed from a facility of nature, that lazily parts with what it has not strength to keep. I despise the weakness which is preposterously call'd *Liberality*; and hate no less the vanity of those that never do a kindness but for the pleasure of boasting of it.

Of

Of Ingratitude.

THere are not so many Ungrateful men as 'tis generally thought; because there are not so many generous men as we imagine. He that in silence suppresses a favour receiv'd, is an unthankful man, that deserv'd it not. But he that proclaims one that he has done, turns it to an Injury, shewing to your disgrace the necessity you had of him, and the relief he has given you thro' ostentation. I would have a man of honour somewhat shy of receiving Obligations, and sensible of them when receiv'd: I would have him that obliges, satisfied with the generosity of the Action, and not think of any acknowledgment from the party oblig'd. When a return is expected, it is no longer Liberality; it is a sort of Trade, which the Spirit of Interest would introduce into Favours.

'Tis true, there are some persons whom nature has made ungrateful: Ingratitude is the main ingredient in their composition; with that their Heart, their Soul, and every part is season'd: they make no returns to Love, not because they are hard and insensible, but because they are ungrateful.

This *Ingratitude*, which is rooted in one's *Heart* or *Constitution*, is, of all the kinds of it, the most opposite to Humanity: for generous Persons may sometimes shake off the remembrance of a benefit, to ease themselves of the trouble that some Obligations are apt to give. But Friendship knits, not fetters us together; and without some extraordinary violence to nature, it is impossible to resist its tender engaging Charms.

I am inclin'd to believe that Women ought not to resist so generous a sentiment, whatever preference may be suggested, from a regard for Virtue. And indeed, they think themselves virtuous, and are only ungrateful, when they refuse their affection to passionate Lovers, who sacrifice every thing for them. To be too kind, would be a trespass on the rights of Honour ; not to be sensible enough, is to cross the nature of their Hearts, which they ought to keep free from perturbation, if possible, but not from a tender impression.

The *Ingratitude of the Soul* is a natural propensity, not to acknowledge a Service, even without a regard to Interest. Avarice may sometimes suppress an acknowledgment, to avoid the expence of a return ; but pure Ingratitude is, without farther design in it self, averse to all Requitals.

There is another sort of Ingratitude, founded on a conceit of our own worth, when Self-love represents a favour bestow'd upon us, as a piece of justice done to us.

The love of Liberty has likewise its Ingratitude, as well as Self-love. The only subjection it allows, is to the Laws ; but out of abhorrence of a dependence, it hates the memory of Obligations that shew a superiority in the Benefactor. This makes Republicans ungrateful. They think that a diminution of their Liberty, which is allow'd to Gratitude. Thus BRUTUS thought it meritorious to sacrifice his Obligations to Liberty. All the kindnesses heap'd on him were converted to injuries, when he began to look upon them as fetters. To sum up all, he cou'd kill a Benefactor that was like to become a Master. An abominable villany amongst the partisans of Gratitude ! An admirable virtue with the sticklers of Liberty !

As there are men purely ungrateful, out of a mere sense of Ingratitude, so there are some merely

ly thankful, out of a pure sense of thankfulness. Their Hearts are sensible not only of good turns, but even of good-will too ; and have of themselves a propensity to acknowledge all manner of Obligations.

According to the great diversity which is found both in Gratitude and Ingratitude, there are some poor Spirits that think themselves oblig'd by every thing, as well as vain humours, that think themselves oblig'd by nothing.

If Self-conceit has its proud ingrates, Distrust of merit has its weak thankful ones, that take common justice for a particular obligation. This diffidence produces an Inclination to Subjection, and the latter is the distinguishing Character of this kind of thankful men. As they are incumber'd with Liberty, and asham'd of Servitude, they raise up chimerical Obligations, to give an honourable colour to their dependence.

I will not reckon among the Grateful, those poor wretches that think themselves oblig'd, for not being hurt. They are not only Slaves, but Slaves that have not even the courage to hope well. To these wretches, all treatment that is not rigorous is favourable, and every thing that is not an Injury, they think a Benefit.

I have but one word more to say about a certain Gratitude of Courtiers, which has not so much respect to the past, as design upon the future. They acknowledge Obligations to those whom fortune has plac'd in any post to oblige them ; and by an affected Gratitude for favours never done, insinuate themselves into those, in whose power it is to do them, and industriously put themselves in the way of them. This artificial acknowledgment, as 'tis undoubtedly no Virtue, so neither is it a Vice, but rather a dexterity, which it is lawful for

a man either to make use of, or guard himself against.

The great ones in requital, have a trick as artificial to excuse themselves from doing kindneſſes, as the Courtiers can have to engage them to it. They reproach men with Services never done, and complain of Ingratitude, tho they have hardly ever obliged any one, to draw from hence a ſpecious pretence to oblige no body.

But let us diſmiſs this affected Gratitude, and theſe myſterious complaints of Ingratitude ; and let us ſee what is to be wiſh'd for in the pretences to, and the diſtribution of, Benefits. I could wiſh in thoſe that claim them, more Merit than Addreſs ; and in the Diſpoſers, more Generoſity than Oſtentation.

Juſtice reſpects every thing in the diſtribution of Favours ; it regulates the Liberality of the giver, and weighs the Merit of the receiver. Generoſity thus circumſtantiated is an admirable Virtue : otherwiſe, it is the motion of a Soul truly noble, but ill-govern'd ; or a wild vain-glorious humour, that thinks Reaſon a clog to it.

There are ſo many things to be conſider'd in the diſtribution of Benefits, that the ſafeſt way is always to obſerve ſtrict Juſtice, and conſult Reaſon equally, both as to thoſe we make the objects of them, and about what we are able to give. But even among thoſe that intend ſtrict juſtice, how many are miſguided by the error of their temper, either in rewarding or puniſhing ? When we give way to inſinuation, and yield to complaiſance, Self-love repreſents to us as Juſtice, a Lavishneſs to them that flatter us ; and we reward them for the artifice they uſe, to deceive our Judgments, and impoſe upon the imbecillity of our Wills.

They deceive themſelves yet more eaſily, who miſtake a moroſe ſevere temper for an inclination to Juſtice.

Justice. The itch of punishing is ingenious in them to set an ill gloss upon every thing. Pleasure with them is vice, and Error a crime. A man must divest himself of humanity to escape their rigour. Misled by a false notion of Virtue, they think they chastise Criminals, while they delight in tormenting the Miserable.

If Justice appoints a great Punishment, (which is sometimes necessary) it is proportion'd to some great Crime ; but is never harsh or rigorous. Severity and Rigour are no part of it, but spring from the humours of those persons that think they practise it. As these sorts of punishments flow from Justice without Rigour, so likewise does Pardon in some cases, rather than from Clemency. To pardon faults of error, is but justice to the failings of our nature : the indulgence we shew to Women that have intrigues, is likewise rather a justice to their weakness, than a pardon of their sin.

Of Religion.

I Might descend to several other particulars relating to Justice ; but it is now high time to proceed to Religion, which ought to be our principal care. None but madmen can depend upon a Life that must certainly have an end, and which may end every hour.

Mere curiosity will make us inquisitive to know what shall become of us after Death. We are too dear to our selves to consent to our intire loss : Self-love secretly opposes the notion of Annihilation. We are desirous to exist always, and the Mind, which is concern'd in its own preservation, improves this desire, by affording some light into a thing of it self so obscure. On the other hand, the Body find-

ing by certain experience that it must die, and being unwilling to die alone, furnishes reasons to involve the Soul in one common ruin ; whilst the Soul frames one to believe, it may subsist for ever. I have searched for all the light I could, both from the Antients and Moderns, to assist my reflections in diving into so abstruse a mystery : I have read all that has been written on the *Immortality of the Soul*, and after I have done so with all possible attention, the clearest proof that I find of the eternity of my Soul, is my own constant desire that it may be so.

I wish I had never read Monsieur DESCARTES'S *Meditations* : the great Reputation of that excellent man among us, would have given me some belief of the Demonstration he promises us ; but there appeared to me more vanity in the assurance he gives us, than solidity in his arguments ; and how desirous soever I was to be convinc'd by his Reasons, all that I can do in his favour or my own, is to remain in the uncertainty I was in before.

I left the study of Metaphysics to make an enquiry into Religions, and returning to that Antiquity which I respect so much, I found among the Greeks and Romans, nothing but a superstitious idolatrous Worship, or politick human Contrivances, establish'd for the Government of Men. It was not difficult for me to see the advantages of the Christian Religion over all the rest ; and using all my endeavours to submit my self with reverence to the belief of its Mysteries, I let my Reason taste with pleasure the purest and most perfect Morality in the world.

Amidst the diversity of Beliefs that divide Christianity, the true Catholick engages me as well by my own free election, were I yet to chuse, as by the habitual impresson it has long since made upon me. But this adherence to my own, does not ani-

mate me against other peoples belief ; and I never entertain'd that indiscreet zeal which inspires a hatred for some persons, because they do not agree with us in opinion. This false Zeal is the result of Self-love ; and a secret deceit represents to us an excess of complacency in our own Sentiments, under the form of Charity towards our Neighbours.

What we now call RELIGIONS, is indeed but *a difference in Religion*, and not *a different Religion*. I rejoice that my Faith is more sound than a Protestant's : yet instead of hating him for this difference of opinion, I love him because he agrees with me in the Fundamentals. The means at length to agree in the whole, is always to communicate in something. A desire of Re-union can never be inspir'd, till the enmity that arises from division be suppress'd. Men may seek one another as sociable, but they never re-unite with their Enemies. Diffimulation and Hypocrisy in Religion, are the only things that ought to be odious : for whoever believes sincerely, altho his Belief should be wrong, deserves Pity, and not Persecution. Blindness in the body bespeaks our Compassion ; why then should that of the mind excite our Hatred ? Under the severest Tyranny of former ages, the Understanding was allow'd its full liberty ; but now a-days there are notions among Christians, wherein the persuasion of what one cannot believe is impos'd as a Law ! In my opinion, every body ought to be free in his Belief, provided it does not tend to raise Factions that may endanger the publick Tranquillity. Churches do of right belong to Sovereigns ; according to whose will and pleasure they are either open'd or shut up ; but our own hearts are a private Church, wherein we are allow'd to worship their Master ?.

Besides

¹ The Emperor Constantius Chlorus, tho a Pagan, was con-
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Besides the difference of Doctrine in some points peculiar to every Sect, I observe, as it were, a sort of particular Spirit that distinguishes them. The Catholick tends particularly to the Love of God, and good Works. We look upon this first Being as an Object sovereignly amiable, and tender Souls are touch'd with the sweet and agreeable Impressions it makes on them. Good Works follow necessarily from this principle ; for Love once receiv'd within, actuates us without, and puts us upon endeavouring all we can to please him we love. All we have to fear in this case is, lest the source of this Love, the Heart, should be corrupted by the mixture of any Passion altogether human. It is likewise to be feared, that instead of obeying the Ordinance of God, we should frame methods of serving him according to our own fancies. But if this Love be real and pure, nothing in the world yields such true sweetness and satisfaction. The inward joy of devout Souls, rises from a secret assurance they have of being agreeable to God ; and the true mortifications, and holy austerities are nothing else but affectionate Sacrifices of themselves.

The Reformed Religion divests men of all confidence in their own merit. The opinion of Predestination, which they begin to be disgusted with, but dare not forego, lest they should be thought to recant, leaves the Mind languid, unmov'd, without affection, under pretence of waiting with submission for the will of Heaven. They are content barely to obey, and seek not to please ; and in a set common Worship, make God the object rather

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tempted to pull down the Churches of the Christians, and would permit no other violence against them. CONSTANTIUS, ne dissentire à majorum præceptis videretur, Conventicula, id est parietes qui restitui poterant, dirui passus est ; verum autem Dei Templum quod est in hominibus, incolume servavit. *Lact. de Mort. Pers. § 15.*

of their Regularity than their Love. To preserve Religion in its Purity, the Calvinists endeavour to reform every thing that appears human; but sometimes to debar man of what is human, they retrench too much of what is address'd to God. Their dislike of our Ceremonies, makes them industrious to refine upon us: yet when they have attain'd to this dry naked Purity, they find not in themselves a sufficient stock of Devotion; and those that are pious amongst them excite in themselves a particular Spirit, which they think supernatural; so much are they disgusted with a Regularity which to them seems too common.

There are in matters of Worship two sorts of humours. The one wou'd be always adding to, and the other always retrenching what is established. In the first, there is a hazard of giving too much out-side to Religion, and covering it with so many exteriors, that the real ground of it cannot be seen thro' them. In the other, the danger is, lest after having retrench'd all that appears superfluous, Religion it self should be cut off. The Catholick might, indeed, spare some Ceremonies; yet that hinders not, but that men of understanding may see well enough thro' them. The Reform'd use too little, and their ordinary Worship is not sufficiently distinguish'd from the common functions of Life. In Places where it is not tolerated, the difficulty prevents their disgust, and the dispute raises a warmth that animates them. Where it rules, it produces only an exact compliance with Duty, such as either the Civil Government, or any other obligation might do.

As for Good Works among the Reformed, they are only the effects of their Faith, and the result of their Belief. We are agreed on both sides, that every Christian is bound to believe, and live aright, but our ways of expressing it differ: they say, that

that *good Works without Faith are but dead Works*; and we, that *Faith without good Works is but dead Faith*.

The Minister MORUS was wont to say amongst his friends, "That his Church had something too hard in its Tenets, and he advised People never to read St. PAUL's *Epistles*, without ending with that of St. JAMES's; for fear, said he, lest St. PAUL's heat against the merit of Good Works, should insensibly make us somewhat remiss in the practice of them."

It may, in my opinion, be affirm'd, That St. PETER and St. JAMES, who preach'd to people sunk into such deep Corruption as the Jews were, had reason to enforce the necessity of Good Works; for thereby they prescrib'd to them what they wanted, and of which they might themselves be convinc'd. But these Apostles would have little advanc'd their Ministry by a discourse about Grace, with a People who thought they had more Faith than all the world besides; who had seen the Miracles perform'd in their favour; and who had a thousand times experienc'd the visible assistances of a God.

St. PAUL acted no less wisely with the Gentiles; it being certain that he would have converted but few people to JESUS CHRIST by the argument of Good Works. The Gentiles were just and temperate, upright and innocent, firm and resolute, to such a degree as to die for their Country. Now to preach Good Works to them, was no more than what the Philosophers did, who taught them to live well. I own, JESUS CHRIST's Morals were purer, but they had nothing that could make a sufficient impression on their minds. It was therefore fitting to preach to them the necessity of Grace, and, as much as was possible, to suppress the confidence they had on their Virtue.

Methinks, that since the Reformation, of which the Immorality of the Clergy was either the pretence or reason : methinks, I say, that since that time Christianity has been made to consist in the Doctrine of Articles of Belief. Those that set up the Reformation arraign'd our corruption and vice, and now a-days we object against them our Good Works. The very same persons that reproach'd us with ill living, will now take no other advantage of us than that of pretending to a purer Faith. We allow the necessity of Belief, but Charity was commanded by JESUS CHRIST, and the Doctrine of Mysteries was not establish'd till a long time after his Death. He did not himself express so clearly what he was, as what he required ; from whence we may conclude, that he rather chose to be obey'd, than to make himself known. Our Faith is obscure, but our Law is very clearly expressed. The necessary points of our Faith, are above our apprehension ; but those of our Duty are suited to the capacities of all the world. In a word, GOD has given us light enough to do well ; and we would indulge with it our curiosity of knowing too much ; and instead of acquiescing in what he is pleased to discover to us, we would pry into what he has conceal'd from us.

I know that the contemplation of heavenly things does sometimes happily disengage us from the world : but it is frequently no more than mere speculation, and the result of a Vice very natural to mankind. The immoderate Ambition of knowledge extends it self beyond nature, even so far as to enquire into what is most mysterious in its Author, not so much out of a design to adore him, as out of a vain curiosity of knowing all things. This vice is close attended by another : Curiosity breeds Presumption ; and being as bold in defining, as indiscreet in inquiring, we erect, as it were, an
infallible

infallible Science of those things which are to us altogether inconceivable. So depravedly do we use the will and understanding ! we proudly aspire to know every thing, and cannot ; we may religiously observe every thing, and will not. Let us be just, charitable, and patient, according to the principles of our Religion, and we shall know and observe at the same time.

I leave it to our Doctors to refute the errors of the Calvinists, 'tis enough for me to be persuaded that our opinions are the sounder. But if rightly apprehended, I dare say the Spirit of both Religions is differently grounded on good Principles ; only one extends farther the exercise of Good Works ; with the other, the cautions to avoid Evil, are more exact. The Catholick with an active resolution, and loving industry, is perpetually seeking some new way of pleasing God. The Reformed, stinted by circumspection and respect, dares not venture beyond a known precept, for fear by imagin'd novelties, of giving too much sway to his fancy.

To be always disputing points of Doctrine, is not the means to reunite us. Arguments being inexhaustible, the Controversy will last as long as there are men to manage it. But if we would leave these Disputes, that only serve to exasperate us, and return without passion to that particular Spirit which distinguishes us, it will not be impossible to find a general one in which we may agree.

Let us Catholicks bridle the restless Zeal, that makes us act a little too much of our own heads. Let the Reformed shake off their unactive regularity, and animate their langour, without departing from their submission to Providence. Let us retrench something in condescension to them, and let them admit something more in complaisance to us. Then, without thinking either of *Free-will*

or *Predestination*, we shall frame insensibly a true rule for our actions, which will be follow'd by that of our opinions.

If we come to a reconciliation of wills upon the good conduct of Life, it will soon produce a good understanding in Doctrine. Let us but join in Good Works, and we shall not long be of separate Faiths.

I conclude from this short Discourse, that it is an ill method of converting men, to attack them by affronting their Judgments. A man defends his notions either as true, or as his own^s; and however it be, he raises a hundred objections against the person that wou'd convince him. Nature has given to every one his proper sense, and seems to have engag'd him to it by a secret fond indulgence. He can submit to the will of another, tho he be free: he can own himself inferior in Courage and Virtue; but he is ashamed to confess a submission to another man's Sense: his most natural reluctance is to acknowledge a superiority of Reason in any one whomsoever.

Our chief advantage is to be born reasonable: our greatest jealousy is to find that others pretend to be so, more than our selves. If we consult the Conversions of antient times, we shall find that the Souls were mov'd, but the Understandings very little convinc'd. The first disposition to receive the truths of Christianity is form'd in the Heart. In things purely natural, 'tis the mind's part to conceive, and its knowledge goes before the affection for the objects: in things supernatural, the Soul is taken, it is affected, it adheres, and unites it self, without ever comprehending them.

Heaven has better prepar'd our Hearts for the impressions of God's Grace, than our Understandings

²⁰ This is one of Montaigne's reflections.

ings for Illumination. His immensity confounds our narrow Intellects: his bounty agrees better with our Love. There is I know not what within us, that secretly pleads for a GOD, whom we cannot comprehend; and hence it is, that to succeed in the Conversion of men, we must settle a pleasing commerce with them, by means of which we may inspire them with the same movements: for in disputes of Religion, the mind in vain strains it self to make us see what we see not; but in a sweet and pious familiarity, it is easy for the Soul to infuse Sentiments.

To consider well the Christian Religion, wou'd make one think, that God had depriv'd it of the light of our Minds, that it might turn more upon the motions of our Hearts. *To love God and our Neighbour* includes all, says St. PAUL. And what is this, but to require a disposition of Heart as well towards God as Man? It is properly to oblige us to do out of a principle of Love, what the Civil Government enjoins by rigorous Laws, and Morality prescribes by a severe order of Reason.

Charity makes us relieve and succour, while Justice forbids us to do wrong. The latter with difficulty hinders opposition; the other with pleasure, procures relief. Those who have the true sentiments that our Religion inspires, can't be unfaithful to a Friend, or ungrateful to a Benefactor. With these good sentiments, a Heart innocently loves those objects God has made amiable, and the most innocent part of our Loves is the most charming and tender.

Let gross and sensual persons complain of our Religion for the constraint it lays upon them; yet the nice and refined will commend it for sparing them disgusts and repentance. More skilful than voluptuous Philosophy in the science of Pleasures,
and

and wiser than severe Philosophy in point of Morality, it refines our taste to Delicacy, and our sentiments to Innocence. Look upon man in a civil Society, if Justice be necessary, yet 'tis a restraint to him. In the pure state of Nature, his Liberty will have something of barbarity in it; and if he govern himself by Morality, his Reason is austere. All other Religions stir up in the mind tempestuous thoughts, and troublesome Passions. They raise against nature superstitious fears, or a furious zeal; sometimes to the sacrificing our Children, like AGAMEMNON; at other times to the devoting our selves, like DECIUS. Only the Christian Religion composes all our Inquietudes, softens all our Fierceness, sets all our tender Movements a going, not only for our friends and neighbours, but for the indifferent, and even for our enemies.

This is the end of the Christian Religion, and this was once the practice of it. If it be otherwise now, it is because we have let it lose its influence on our hearts, and given way to the encroachments of our imaginations upon it. Hence springs the division of our minds about Faith, instead of the union of our wills in Good Works; insomuch, that what ought to be a band of Charity betwixt men, is now become the subject of their Quarrels, Jealousies and ill nature.

From this diversity of Opinions has arisen that of Parties; and the adherence to Parties has caus'd Persecutions and Wars. Many thousands have died in disputing about the manner of receiving, what, 'twas agreed on all hands, they did receive in the Sacrament. 'Tis a mischief that still continues, and will last till Religion quits the curiosity of our minds for the tenderness of our hearts; and disgusted with the foolish presumption of our
Inquiries,

M. DE ST. EVREMOND. 91

Inquiries, returns to the sweet motions of our Love.



A P R O B L E M

In imitation of the Spaniards:

T O M A D A M

*DE QUEROUALLE*¹.

I Know not which of the two is more injurious to the happiness of the Fair-Sex; "Either to
"abandon themselves wholly to their Inclinations,
"or strictly to follow the dictates of Virtue; and
"whether the indulging their Passions be attended
"with more Misfortunes, than they are depriv'd
"of Pleasures by the constraint they lay on them-
"selves." I have met with amorous Ladies lamenting themselves for the contempt they were fallen into: I have seen Prudes groaning under the severities of Virtue; and who endeavour'd by sighs to ease their swelling Heart of the secret torment they endur'd, by not daring to indulge their Passion: in short, as I have seen the one regret the Reputation they had lost, so have I seen others wish for the Pleasures they durst not enjoy. Happy
is

¹ She came into England in the year 1670, and was created Dutchess of Portsmouth in 1673. See the Life of M. de St. Eyremond, under the year 1670.

is the Woman, who knows how to behave herself discreetly, without curbing her Inclinations ! for as it is a disgrace for one of her Sex to abandon herself to Love, without any regard to her Fame ; 'tis on the other side, a great mortification to pass her life without an Amour.

To avoid this last misfortune, you will do well to follow an Advice, which I design to give you without any by-end. Do not too severely reject Temptations, which in this Country offer themselves with more modesty than is required, even in a Virgin, to hearken to them. You may, perhaps, be so vain, as to be pleas'd with no one but your self : but you'll be soon tired with being pleas'd and lov'd by no body else ; and whatever complacency Self-love may afford, you will stand in need of another's Love for your real satisfaction and entertainment. Yield therefore to the sweets of Temptations, instead of consulting your Pride. The latter would soon persuade you to return to France ; and France, as 'tis the fate of many others, would throw you into a Nunnery : but tho your own free choice should lead you to that melancholy place of retirement, you ought, however, to have made your self worthy of entering it before-hand. What figure will you make there, if you want the Character of a Penitent ? The true Penitent afflicts and mortifies herself on ther emembrance of her Faults : but what can a harmless innocent Maiden repent of ? You will appear ridiculous to the other Nuns, who have just reason to repent, for repenting only out of mere grimace.

Another inconveniency which you will not fail to meet with, is, that instead of carrying to the Convent a disgust for Love, the very Convent will suggest to you the thoughts of it. That holy Place turns Love into Devotion, when one has had no experience of this Passion. In such a case, all the fervency

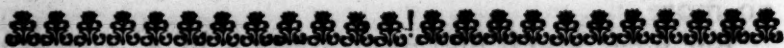
fervency of your Zeal being converted into Love, you will in vain sigh for its Pleasures ; and in the difficulty of enjoying them, you will, for your own torment, perpetually represent to your self, how easy it was for you to come at them in the world. Thus you will either be consumed with Regrets, or devour'd by Wishes, according as your mind turns either to the remembrance of what you might have done, or to the thought of what you can do no more.

But what you'll find most strange in a Nunnery is, that your Reason will contribute as much as your Passion to make you unhappy. The more knowledge you have, the more you will suffer by the imbecillity and ignorance of an old Abbess ; and the light of your understanding will only serve to excite murmurings in your heart. Under a mortify'd Countenance you will harbour rebellious thoughts ; and obeying orders which you cannot either sincerely submit to, or openly oppose, you will linger out uncomfortable days in repining at your Condition, with the outward grimace of a Sham-Penitent. A melancholy Life this, dear Sister, to be oblig'd, for custom-sake, to mourn for a Sin one has not committed, at the very time one begins to have a desire to commit it !

This is the miserable condition of harmless Virgins, who carry their innocence to a Nunnery ! They are unhappy in it, for not having laid a good foundation for their Repentance : a foundation so necessary to religious Houses, that of mere pity we shall be oblig'd to send you to Epsom, Tunbridge, or the Bath, that you may, if possible, have some small occasion for Penance.

Whether, as I wish, you remain in the World, or as I fear, you retreat out of it, it is your interest to adjust and agree two things, that seem incompatible, but are not so, I mean *Love* and *Discretion*.

cretion. You may, perhaps, have been told, that 'tis better not to love at all, than to love with such a constraint ; but the rule of this discretion has nothing austere in it, since it only requires the loving but one Person at one time. That Lady who loves many, abandons herself : and of this kind of good, as of all others, the use is commendable, and the profusion dishonourable.



A LETTER

TO

COUNT D'OLONNE.

AS soon as I heard of your disgrace¹, I did my self the honour to write to you, to assure you how much I was concern'd at it : and the business of this Letter is to let you know, that we ought at least to avoid that troublesom companion, Melancholy, at a time when it is not in our power to relish Joy. If there be any polite Gentlemen where you are, their Conversation may make some amends for that which you have lost. But if you find none there, Books and good Cheer may help to supply that defect, and afford you no ordinary Consolation. I talk to you like a Master who is able to give Lessons ; not that I presume upon

¹ Count d'Olonne, M. de Vineuil, the Abbé d'Effiat, and two or three others, having talk'd pretty freely of the King, were banish'd the Court in 1674. Count d'Olonne was first confin'd in the City of Orleans ; but he had, afterwards, leave to retire to his seat of Montmirel, near Villers-Cotrets.

upon the superiority of understanding : but I fancy I have some right to assume an authority over persons that are novices in Disgrace, by the long experience I have had of Misfortunes, and unlucky Accidents.

Amongst the Books you are to chuse for your entertainment in the Country, apply your self principally to those that strike in with your humour, rather than those that pretend to fortify your mind by Arguments and Reasonings. The latter engage and combat the evil, which is always done at the expence of the Person, in whom this conflict happens ; the first make it to be forgotten, and it is no hard matter to make joy succeed to obliterated grief.

Morality is only proper to form methodically a good Conscience ; and I have seen several grave and composed men come out of its school, whose aukward Prudence made them ridiculous. Men of true honour and good breeding need none of these Lectures ; for as they know what's good purely by the exactness of their taste, so they are disposed to it by their own motion. Not but that there are certain occasions, where its assistance is not to be rejected ; but where we want its aid, we should be glad to have none of these occasions.

If you were reduc'd to the necessity of having your veins open'd, and bleeding to death, I would allow you to read *SENECA*, and to imitate him : tho I would rather chuse the indifference of *PETRONIUS*, than an affected forc'd constancy, which is not attain'd without great difficulty.

If you were of a humour to devote your self for your Country, I would advise you to read nothing but the Lives of those old Romans, who courted a glorious Death for the good of their Nation : but considering your present circumstances,

I think you lie under an obligation to live for your self, and to spend the remainder of your Life as agreeably as you can. Now this being your case, leave off all study of Wisdom, which will neither contribute to the lessening of your Troubles, nor to the regaining of your Pleasures. You may seek for constancy in *SENECA*, but will find nothing in him but severity. *PLUTARCH* will be less troublesome; however, he will make you grave and serious, rather than sedate. *MONTAIGNE* will bring you acquainted with human Nature better than any other; but then 'tis human Nature with all its weaknesses: a knowledge useful indeed in Prosperity to teach moderation; but sad and afflicting in adverse Fortune.

Let not the unhappy, therefore, learn from Books to be disturb'd at our miseries, but to laugh at our follies: for which reason you will prefer the reading of *LUCIAN*, *PETRONIUS*, and *DON QUIXOT*, before that of *SENECA*, *PLUTARCH*, and *MONTAIGNE*. I recommend to you *DON QUIXOT* above all; let your affliction be what it will, the delicacy of his ridicule will insensibly make you relish mirth.

You'll tell me, perhaps, that I was not of so gay a humour in my own Misfortunes, as I appear to be in yours; and that it is ill breeding in a man to bestow all his concern upon his own Misfortunes, and be indifferent to, nay, and even merry with the Calamities of his Friends. I should agree with you in that, if I behaved my self so: but I can honestly affirm to you, that I am little less concerned at your Exile than your self; and the little mirth which I advise you to, is in order to have a share of it my self, when I shall find you capable of receiving it.

As for what relates to my own Misfortunes, if I have formerly appear'd to you more afflicted under

der them, than I seem to be at present, it is not because I was so indeed. I was of opinion that disgraces exacted from us the decorum of a melancholy Air ; and that this apparent Mortification was a respect due to the will of our Superiors, who seldom bethink themselves of punishing us, without a design to afflict us. But then you are to know, that under a sad out-side and mortified countenance, I gave my self all the satisfaction I could find in my self ; and all the pleasure I could take in the Conversation of my Friends.

After having found the vanity of that grave temper we learn from Morality, I should grow ridiculous my self, if I continued so serious a discourse ; which makes me proceed to give you some Advice that shall be less troublesome than Instructions.

Adapt, as much as possibly you can, your palate and appetite to your health ; 'tis a great secret to be able to reconcile the agreeable and necessary in two things, which have been almost always opposite. Yet after all, to arrive at this great mystery, we want nothing but Sobriety and Niceness ; and what ought not a man to do, that he may learn to chuse those delicious dishes at his Meals, which will keep both his Mind and Body in a good disposition all the remainder of the day ? A man may be sober without being nice, but he can never be nice without being sober. Happy is the person that enjoys both these qualities together ! for thus his Pleasure is even inseparable from his Diet.

Spare no cost to get Champagne Wines, tho you were two hundred Leagues from Paris. Those of Burgundy have lost all their credit with the men of good taste, and scarce do they preserve a small remainder of their old Reputation with the Citizens. There is no Province that affords excellent

Wines for all Seasons, but Champagne. It furnishes us with the Wines d'Ay, d'Avenet, and d'Auvilé till the Spring; Tefsy, Sillery, and Versenai, for the rest of the year.

If you ask me which of all these Wines I prefer, without being sway'd by the fashion of Tastes, which false pretenders to delicacy have introduc'd, I will tell you, that the Wine d'Ay is the most natural of all Wines, the most wholesom, the most free from all smell of the soil, and of the most exquisite agreeableness, in regard of its Peach-taste which is peculiar to it, and is in my opinion, the chief of all Tastes and Flavours. LEO X. CHARLES V. FRANCIS I. and HENRY VIII. had each of them their Houses in or near Ay, in order to the more curious getting their quantities of Wines. Amongst the greatest affairs of the world, in which those Princes were more or less concern'd, it was not the least of their cares to have the Wine d'Ay in their Cellars.

Be not too desirous of Rarities, but be nice in your choice of what may be had with convenience. A good wholesom natural Soop, which is neither too weak nor too strong, is to be preferred for common Diet before all others, as well for the exquisiteness of its Taste, as for the advantage of its Use. Tender juicy Mutton, good sucking Veal, white and curious barn-door Fowls, well fed, but not cramm'd; fat Quail taken in the Country; Pheasant, Partridge, and Rabbet, all which have an agreeable natural flavour in their Taste, are the true Meats which may help to furnish your table all the seasons of the year. The Wood-hen is particularly to be esteem'd for excellency, but is not to be sought after where you or I are, by reason of its great rarity.

If an indispensable necessity obliges you to dine with some of your Neighbours, whom either their
money

money or their dexterity hath excused from serving in the Rear-ban, commend the Hare, the Stag, the Roe-buck, the Wild-boar, but eat none of them : let even Ducks and Teal have your good word too. Of all brown Meats the Snipe alone is to be commended, in favour of its taste, tho it is somewhat prejudicial to Health.

Look upon all mixtures, and kitchin compositions, call'd Ragous, or Kick-shaws, to be little better than Poison. If you eat but little of them, they will do you but little hurt ; if you eat a great deal, it's impossible but their Pepper, Vinegar, and Onions must ruin your taste at last, and soon cause an alteration in your Health.

Sauces, if you make them your self as simple and plain as is possible, can do no harm at all. Salt and Orange are the most general, and most natural Seasoning. Fine Herbs are wholesomer, and have something in them more exquisite than Spices ; but they are not equally proper for every thing. One must use them with judgment in Meats where they are most agreeable ; and distribute them with so much discretion, that they may improve the proper taste of the Meat, without making their own discern'd.

Having thus discoursed to you of the quality of Wines, and the properties of Meats, 'tis necessary to come to the most proper counsel for the adapting of the Palate to the Body.

Let Nature incite you to eat and drink by a secret disposition, which is lightly perceiv'd, and doth not press you to it thro' necessity. Without appetite, the most wholesom Food is capable of hurting, and the most agreeable of disgusting us. With hunger, the necessity of eating is a sort of Evil which causes another after the Meal is over, by making us eat more than we should. The Appetite (vulgarly call'd a *good Stomach*) prepares, if

I may so speak, an exercise for our heat in the digestion : whereas greediness prepares labour and pain for it. The way to keep us always in a good temper, is to suffer neither too much emptiness, nor too much repletion ; that so Nature may never be tempted to fill it self greedily with what it wants, nor impatient to discharge its load.

This is all that my Experience has been able to furnish me with, in relation to Reading and good Cheer. Before I conclude, I will add a word or two concerning Love.

If you have a Mistress at Paris, forget her as soon as ever you can ; for she will not fail to change, and it is good to be beforehand with the unfaithful. A Person amiable at Court, aims at being belov'd there, and where she is loved, she loves at last. The Ladies that preserve a Passion for absent persons, raise but little in those that see them ; and the continuation of their Love to the absent, is less an honour to their Constancy, than a scandal to their Beauty. Thus, Sir, whether your Mistress loves another, or whether she loves you still, good sense ought to make you leave her either as deceitful or as contemned. Nevertheless, in case you foresee an end of your Disgrace, you ought not to put an end to your Love ; a short absence excites Passions, whereas a long one extinguishes them.

What way soever your mind turns, give not a new weight to it by too much Seriousness. Disgrace is but too heavy of it self. Practise in your Exile, what PETRONIUS did at his Death : *Amove res serias quibus gravitas & constantiae gloria peti solet ; tibi, ut illi, levia carmina & faciles versus.*

There are some, whose Misfortunes have render'd them devout by a certain Compassion, a secret Pity, which a man is apt to entertain for himself,

self, proper enough to dispose men to a more religious Life. My Disgraces never gave me this sort of compassion. Nor has Nature made me sensible enough of my own misfortunes. The loss of my Friends might be able to excite in me those tender sorrows and nice afflictions, out of which Devotion is form'd in process of time. I would not advise any one to resist that Devotion which springs from compassion, nor that which gives us an assurance. The one agreeably affects the Soul; the other settles the Mind in a sweet repose: but all men, and particularly the unfortunate, ought to defend themselves with care from a superstitious Devotion, which would mix its black melancholy vapours with those of Disgrace.

Of Antient and Modern
T R A G E D Y.

THERE never were so many Rules to write a good Tragedy by; and yet so few good ones are now made, that the Players are oblig'd to revive and act all the old ones. I remember that the Abbé D'AUBIGNAC wrote one according to the Laws he had imperiously prescrib'd for the Stage¹. This Piece had no success: notwithstanding which he boasted in all companies, that he was the only French Writer who had exactly follow'd the precepts of ARISTOTLE: where-

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upon

¹ Francis Hedelin, Abbot d'Aubignac, publish'd in the year 1657. a Treatise intitled, *La Pratique du Theatre, or the Practice of the Stage.*

upon the Prince of CONDE' said wittily, *I am oblig'd to M. D'AUBIGNAC for having so exactly follow'd ARISTOTLE'S Rules; but I will never forgive the Rules of ARISTOTLE, for having put M. D'AUBIGNAC upon writing so bad a Tragedy.*

It must be acknowledg'd, that ARISTOTLE'S *Art of Poetry* is an excellent Work: but however, there's nothing so perfect in it, as to be the standing rule of all Nations and all Ages. DESCARTES and GASSENDI have found out truths, that were unknown to ARISTOTLE. CORNEILLE has discover'd beauties for the Stage, of which ARISTOTLE was ignorant: and as our Philosophers have observ'd errors in his *Physicks*, our Poets have spy'd out faults in his *Poeticks*, at least with respect to us; considering what great change all things have undergone since his time.

The Gods and Goddeses amongst the Antients brought about every thing that was great and extraordinary upon the Theatre, either by their Hatred or their Friendship; by their Revenge, or by their Protection; and among so many supernatural things, nothing appear'd fabulous to the People, who believ'd there pass'd a familiar correspondence between Gods and Men. Their Gods, generally speaking, acted by human Passions: their men undertook nothing without the Counsel of their Gods; and executed nothing without their Assistance. Thus in this mixture of the Divinity and Humanity, there was nothing which was not credible.

But all these wonders are downright Romance to us, at this time of day. The Gods are wanting to us, and we are wanting to the Gods; and if, in imitation of the Antients, an Author would introduce Angels and Saints upon our Stage, the devout sort of people would be offended at it, and look on him as a profane person; and the Libertines

tines wou'd certainly think him weak. Our Preachers wou'd by no means suffer a confusion of the Pulpit and Theatre ; or that the People should go and learn those matters from the mouth of Comedians, which themselves deliver in their Churches, with authority to the whole People.

Besides this, it wou'd give too great an advantage to the Libertines, who might ridicule in a Comedy those very things which they receive at Church, with a seeming submission ; either out of respect to the Place where they are deliver'd, or to the Character of the Person that utters them.

But let us put the case, that our Doctors should freely leave all holy matters to the liberty of the Stage: let us likewise take it for granted, that men of the least devotion would hear them with as great an inclination to be edified, as Persons of the profoundest resignation ; yet certain it is, that the foundest Doctrines, the most Christian Actions, and the most useful Truths, wou'd produce a kind of Tragedy that wou'd please us the least of any thing in the world.

The spirit of our Religion is directly opposite to that of Tragedy. The humility and patience of our Saints carry too direct an opposition to those heroical Virtues, that are so necessary for the Theatre. What zeal, what force is there which Heaven does not bestow upon NEARCHUS and POLIEUCTES*? and what is there wanting on the part of these new Christians, to answer fully the end of these happy gifts? The passion and charms of a young lovely Bride, make not the least impression upon the mind of POLIEUCTES. The politick considerations of FELIX, as they less affect us, so they make a less impression. Insensible both of Prayers

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and

* See Corneille's POLIEUCTES.

and Menaces, POLIEUCTES has a greater desire to die for God, than other men have to live for themselves. Nevertheless, this very subject, which wou'd make one of the finest Sermons in the world, wou'd have made a wretched Tragedy, if the conversation of PAULINA and SEVERUS, heightned with other sentiments and other passions, had not preserved that reputation to the Author, which the Christian Virtues of our Martyrs had made him lose.

The Theatre loses all its agreeableness when it pretends to represent sacred things; and sacred things lose a great deal of the religious opinion that is due to them, by being represented upon the Theatre.

To say the truth, the Histories of the Old Testament are infinitely better suited to our Stage. MOSES, SAMPSON, and JOSHUAH, wou'd meet with much better success, than POLIEUCTES and NEARCHUS: for the wonders they wou'd work there, wou'd be a fitter subject for the Theatre. But I am apt to believe, that the Priests wou'd not fail to exclaim against the Profanation of these sacred Histories; with which they fill their ordinary Conversations, their Books, and their Sermons: and to speak soberly upon the point, the miraculous passage thro' the Red-Sea; the Sun stopt in his career by the Prayer of JOSHUAH; and whole Armies defeated by SAMPSON with the Jaw-bone of an Ass; all these Miracles, I say, wou'd not be credited in a Play, because we believe them in the Bible; but we should be rather apt to question them in the Bible, because we should believe nothing of them in a Play.

If what I have deliver'd is founded on good and solid Reasons, we ought to content our selves with things purely natural, but, at the same time, such as are extraordinary; and in our Heroes to chuse the

the principal Actions which we may believe possible as human ; and which may cause admiration in us, as being rare and of an elevated character. In a word, we should have nothing but what is great, yet still let it be human : in the human, we must carefully avoid mediocrity ; and fable, in that which is great.

I am by no means willing to compare the *Pharsalia* to the *Æneis* ; I know the just difference of their value : but as for what purely regards elevation, POMPEY, CESAR, CATO, CURIO, and LABIENUS, have done more for LUCAN, than JUPITER, MERCURY, JUNO, VENUS, and all the train of the other Gods and Goddeffes, have done for VIRGIL.

The ideas which LUCAN gives us of these great men, are truly greater, and affect us more sensibly than those which VIRGIL gives us of his Deities. The latter has clothed his Gods with human infirmities, to adapt them to the capacity of Men : the other has raised his Heroes so, as to bring them into competition with the Gods themselves :

Victrix causa Diis placuit, sed victa Catoni.

In VIRGIL, the Gods are not so valuable as the Heroes : in LUCAN, the Heroes equal the Gods.

To give you my opinion freely, I believe that the Tragedy of the Antients might have suffer'd a happy loss in the banishment of their Gods, their Oracles, and Soothsayers.

For it proceeded from these Gods, these Oracles, and these Diviners, that the Stage was sway'd by a Spirit of Superstition and Terror, capable of infecting mankind with a thousand errors, and overwhelming them with more numerous mischiefs. And if we consider the usual impressions which

Tragedy

Tragedy made at Athens in the minds of the Spectators, we may safely affirm, that PLATO was more in the right, who prohibited the use of them, than ARISTOTLE who recommended them : for as their Tragedies wholly consisted in excessive motions of Fear and Pity, was not this the direct way to make the Theatre a School of *Terror* and *Pity*, where People only learnt to be affrighted at all dangers, and to abandon themselves to despair upon every misfortune.

It will be a hard matter to persuade me, that a soul accustomed to be terrified for what regards another, has strength enough to support the misfortunes that concern it self. This perhaps was the reason why the Athenians became so susceptible of the impressions of fear ; and that this spirit of terror, which the Theatre inspired into them with so much art, became at last but too natural to their Armies.

At Sparta and Rome, where only examples of Valour and Constancy were publicly shewn, the People were no less brave and resolute in Battle, than they were unshaken and constant in the Calamities of the Republick. Ever since this art of fearing and lamenting was set up at Athens, all those disorderly Passions which they had as it were imbibed at their publick representations, got footing in their Camps, and attended them in their Wars.

Thus a spirit of Superstition occasion'd the defeat of their Armies ; as a spirit of Lamentation made them sit down contented with bewailing their great Misfortunes, when they ought to have found out proper remedies for them. For how was it possible for them not to learn despair in this pitiful School of Commiseration ? The Persons they usually represented upon it, were examples of
the

the greatest Misery, and subjects but of ordinary Virtues.

So great was their desire to lament, that they represented fewer virtues than misfortunes ; lest a Soul rais'd to the admiration of Heroes, should be less inclin'd to pity the Distressed. And in order to imprint these sentiments of Affliction the deeper in their Spectators, they had always upon their Theatre a Chorus of Virgins, or of old Men, who furnish'd them, upon every event, either with their Terrors, or their Tears.

ARISTOTLE was sensible enough what prejudice this might do the Athenians ; but he thought he sufficiently prevented it by establishing a certain Purgation, which no one hitherto has understood ; and which, in my opinion, he himself never fully comprehended. For, can any thing be so ridiculous, as to form a Science which will infallibly discompose our minds, only to set up another, which does not certainly pretend to cure us ? Or to raise a perturbation in our Souls for no other end, than to endeavour afterwards to calm it, by obliging it to reflect upon the dejected condition it has been in ?

Among a thousand Persons that are present at the Theatre, perhaps there may be six Philosophers who are capable of recovering their former Tranquility, by the assistance of these prudent and useful Meditations : but the multitude will scarce make any such judicious Reflections ; and we may be almost assured, that what we see constantly represented on the Theatre, will not fail, at long run, to produce in us a habit of these unhappy motions.

Our Theatrical Representations are not subject to the same inconveniencies, as those of the Antients were ; since our fear never goes so far as to raise this superstitious Terror, which produc'd such ill effects upon Valour. Our Fear, generally speaking,

is nothing else but an agreeable Uneasiness, which consists in the suspension of our Minds ; 'tis a dear concern, which our Soul has for those subjects that draw its affection to them.

We may almost say the same of Pity, as 'tis used on our Stage. We divest it of all its weakness ; and leave it all that we call charitable and human. I love to see the Misfortune of some great unhappy person lamented ; I am content, with all my heart, that he should attract our Compassion, nay, sometimes command our Tears : but then I would have these tender and generous Tears paid to his Misfortunes and Virtues together ; and that this melancholy sentiment of Pity be accompanied with vigorous Admiration, which shall stir up in our Souls a sort of an amorous desire to imitate him.

We were oblig'd to mingle somewhat of Love in the new Tragedy, the better to remove those black Ideas which the antient Tragedy caused in us by Superstition and Terror. And in truth, there is no Passion that more excites us to every thing that is noble and generous, than a virtuous Love. A man who may cowardly suffer himself to be insulted by a contemptible Enemy, will yet defend what he loves, tho to the apparent hazard of his Life, against the attacks of the most valiant. The weakest and most fearful Creatures ; those Creatures that are naturally inclin'd to fear and to run away, will fiercely encounter what they dread most, to preserve the object of their Love. Love has a certain heat which supplies the defect of Courage in those who want it most ! But to confess the truth, our Authors have made as ill an use of this noble Passion, as the Antients did of their Fear and Pity : for if we except eight or ten Plays, where its impulses have been managed to great advantage ; we have no Tragedies in which both Lovers and Love are not equally injur'd.

We

We have an affected Tenderneſs where we ought to place the nobleſt ſentiments. We beſtow a ſoftneſs on what ought to be moſt moving ; and ſometimes, when we mean plainly to expreſs the graces of Nature, we fall into a vicious and mean Simplicity.

We imagine we make Kings and Emperors perfect Lovers, but in truth we make ridiculous Princes of them ; and by the complaints and ſighs which we beſtow upon them, where they ought neither to complain nor ſigh, we repreſent them weak, both as Lovers and as Princes. Our great Heroes upon the Theatre, do often make love like Shepherds ; and thus the innocence of a ſort of rural Paſſion, ſupplies with them the place of Glory and Valour.

If an Actreſs has the art to weep and bemoan herſelf after a moving lively manner, we give her our tears, at certain places which demand gravity ; and becauſe ſhe pleaſes beſt when ſhe ſeems to be affected, ſhe ſhall put on grief all along, indifferently.

Sometimes we muſt have a plain, unartificial, ſometimes a tender, and ſometimes a melancholy whining Love, without regarding where that Simplicity, Tenderneſs, or Grief is requiſite : and the reaſon of it is plain ; for as we muſt needs love every where, we look for diverſity in the manners, and ſeldom or never place it in the Paſſions.

I am in good hopes we ſhall one day find out the true uſe of this Paſſion, which is now become too common : that which ought to ſweeten cruel or calamitous accidents ; that which ought to affect our very Souls, to animate our Courage, and raiſe our Spirits, will not certainly be always made the Subject of a little affected Tenderneſs, or of a weak Simplicity. Whenever this happens, we need not envy the Antients ; and without paying too great a
reſpect

respect to Antiquity, or being too much prejudiced against the present Age, we shall not set up the Tragedies of SOPHOCLES and EURIPIDES, as the only models for the Dramatick Compositions of our times.

However, I don't say that these Tragedies wanted any thing that was necessary to recommend them to the palate of the Athenians : but should a man translate even the *Oedipus*, the best performance of all Antiquity, into French, with the same spirit and force as we see it in the original, I dare be bold to affirm, that nothing in the world would appear to us more cruel, more opposite to the true sentiments which mankind ought to have.

Our Age has, at least, this advantage over theirs, that we are allow'd the liberty to hate Vice and love Virtue. As the Gods occasion'd the greatest crimes on the Theatre of the Antients, these crimes captivated the respect of the Spectators ; and the People durst not find fault with those things which were really abominable. When they saw AGAMEMNON sacrifice his own Daughter, and a Daughter too that was so tenderly belov'd by him, to appease the indignation of the Gods, they only consider'd this barbarous Sacrifice as a pious obedience, and the highest proof of a religious submission.

Now in that superstitious Age, if a man still preserv'd the common sentiments of Humanity, he could not avoid murmuring at the cruelty of the Gods, like an impious person ; and if he wou'd show his Devotion to the Gods, he must needs be cruel and barbarous to his own Fellow-Creatures : he must, like AGAMEMNON, offer the greatest violence both to Nature, and to his own Affection :

Tantum Relligio potuit suadere malorum,

says LUCRETIVS, upon the account of this barbarous Sacrifice.

Now-

Now-a-days we see men represented upon the Theatre without the interposition of the Gods; and this conduct is infinitely more useful both to the Publick, and to private Persons: for in our Tragedies we neither introduce any Villain who is not detested, nor any Heroe, who does not cause himself to be admir'd. With us, few Crimes escape unpunished, and few Virtues go off unrewarded. In short, by the good Examples we publickly represent on the Theatre, by the agreeable Sentiments of Love and Admiration, which are discreetly interwoven with a rectified Fear and Pity, we are in a capacity of arriving to that perfection which HORACE desires:

Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci:

which can never be effected by the rules of the Antient Tragedy.

I shall conclude with a new and daring Thought of my own, and that is this: we ought in Tragedy, before all things whatever, to look after a Greatness of Soul well express'd, which excites in us a tender Admiration. By this sort of Admiration our Minds are sensibly ravished, our Courages elevated, and our Souls deeply affected.





ON THE
 CHARACTERS
 OF
 TRAGEDIES.

I Formerly design'd to write a Tragedy ; but what I found the hardest matter of all, was, to defend my self from a secret suggestion of Self-love, which will not easily suffer a man to lay aside his own Temper, to take up that of another. I remember that I drew my own Character, without ever designing it ; and that the Heroe dwindled insensibly into the little merit of ST. EVREMOND ; whereas ST. EVREMOND ought to have rais'd himself to the great virtues of his Heroe. It fell out with my Passions as it did with my Character ; for I express'd my own motions while I endeavour'd to express his. If I was amorously inclin'd, I turn'd every thing upon Love ; if I found my self inclin'd to Pity, I was not wanting to provide Misfortunes for it : I made the Actor speak whatever I found within my own breast at home ; and, in short, represented my self under the name of another. Let us not quarrel with the Heroes of our Tragedies, for being too liberal of their Tears, which they should only shed upon proper occasions ; they are the Poet's own Tears, whose natural

tural temper being too compassionate, he is not able to resist their Tendernefs, which he has formed within himself. If he cou'd content himself only with entring into the sentiments of his Heroes, we might expect that his Soul, which he only lends to Grief for a few moments, might observe some moderation: but when Authors take it to themselves, they express in reality, what they ought only to represent as probable. 'Tis a secret to know how to express our selves justly in what relates to the Thoughts, but infinitely more in what concerns the Passions: for it is more difficult for the Soul to disengage it self from Passions, than for the Mind to divert its Thoughts. The Passions, 'tis true, ought to be lively, but never strain'd; for if it were left to the Spectators to chuse one of two extremes, they would much sooner pitch on the defect than the excess. He that does not carry on the Passions far enough, does not content his Audience, and merits no applause; but he that pushes them on too far, wounds the Imagination, and must expect to be exploded for his pains. The former gives us the pleasure to supply his defects by our own invention; the latter gives us the trouble to retrench his superfluities, which is always painful and tiresom. When the Heart, for instance, finds it self touch'd so much as it ought to be, it endeavours to comfort it self; and as of our own natures we return from our Passions to our Judgment, we judge not very favourably of Tendernefs and Tears. Those of the most unfortunate ought to be managed with great discretion; for the tenderest Spectator soon dries up his: *cito arefcit lacryma in aliena miseria* *.

Vol. II.

H

In

* Nihil est tam miserabile, quàm ex beato miser. Et hoc totum quidem moveat, si bona ex fortuna quis cadat; & à quo-
runt

In truth, if we see a person too long afflicted upon the Theatre, we either laugh at his weakness, or the long pitying of a tedious Torment, which renders the misfortunes of another our own, offends Nature, which ought only to be touch'd. Every time that I go to hear our most moving Tragedies, the Tears of the Actors draw forth mine with a secret pleasure, which I find in being mov'd: but if the Affliction continues, I am uneasy, and impatiently expect some turn of the Scene to deliver me from these melancholy Impressions. I have frequently seen it happen in those long discourses of Tenderness, that towards the end, the Author gives us another idea, than that of a Lover whom he designs to represent. This Lover sometimes commences a Philosopher, and reasons gravely in his Passion, or by way of Lecture explains to us, after what manner it is form'd. Sometimes the Spectator, who at first suffer'd his Imagination to range with the person represented, comes home to himself, and finds that 'tis not the Hero, but the Poet that speaks, who in doleful strain of elegy, wou'd needs have us weep at some feign'd misfortune.

An Author mistakes, when he thinks to get my good opinion at this rate: he provokes my Laughter, when he pretends to possess me with Pity. But what is more ridiculous, even than this, is to hear a man declaim eloquently on his misfortunes. He that takes a great deal of pains in describing them, saves me the trouble of condoling with him; 'tis Nature that suffers, and 'tis she that ought to complain: she sometimes loves to speak her private

rum caritate divellatur; quæ amittat, aut amiserit, in quibus malis sit, futurusve sit exprimatur breviter. CITO ENIM ARESKIT LACRYMA, PRÆSERTIM IN ALIENIS MALIS.
Cicer. Part. Orat. Sect. 17.

vate thoughts, in order to gain relief by it ; but not to expatiate eloquently, to shew her fine parts.

Neither have I any mighty opinion of the violence of that Passion, which is ingenious to express it self with great pomp and magnificence. The Soul, when it is sensibly touch'd, does not afford the mind an opportunity to think intensely ; much less to ramble and divert it self in the variety of its conceptions. 'Tis upon this account that I can hardly bear with OVID's luxuriant fancy. He is witty in his Grief, and gives himself a world of trouble to shew his Wit, when we expect nothing but natural thoughts from him. VIRGIL deservedly makes a just impression upon us, in which we find nothing either languishing or strain'd. As he leaves us nothing more to desire in him ; so on the other hand, he has nothing that offends us ; and for this reason, our Souls behold with pleasure, that amiable proportion which shines in all parts of his Work.

For my part, I am astonished, that in our age, when all Dramatick Pieces turn upon Love, we should be grossly ignorant of its nature and motions ; altho Love acts differently according to the diversity of temper, yet we may reduce all the effects of so general a Passion, to three principal heads, which are, to *Love*, to *Burn*, and to *Languish*.

To *Love*, simply consider'd, is the first condition of our Soul, when she moves by the impression of some agreeable Object, whereupon is form'd a secret complacency in the person that loves ; and this complacency becomes at last, a devoting one's self to the person that is loved. To *Burn*, is a violent condition, subject to Inquietudes, to Pains, to Torments, sometimes to Troubles, to Transports, to Despair ; in a word, to every thing that agitates us, and disturbs our repose. To *Languish*

is the finest movement of Love ; 'tis the delicate effect of a pure Flame, which gently consumes us ; 'tis a dear and tender Malady, which makes us hate all thoughts of a cure. We entertain it secretly in the bottom of our Hearts, and if it comes to discover it self, our Eyes, our Silence, a Sigh that escapes us, a Tear that drops in spite of us, express it infinitely better, than all the eloquence of the most elaborate Discourse. As for those long conversations of Tenderness, those Sighs we hear incessantly, and those Tears that are shed every moment, they may be ascrib'd to some other cause ; for, in my opinion, they are not so much the effects of Love, as the folly of the Lover. I have a greater respect for that Passion than to load it with any scandal which does not belong to it. A few Tears are sufficient for a Lover to express his Love by : when they are immoderate or unseasonable, they rather shew his Infirmary than his Passion. I dare venture to say, that a Lady who might have some compassion for her Lover, when she sees him discreetly and respectfully expressing the Inquietudes she gives him, would laugh at him for a chicken-hearted milk-sop, if he whin'd and sobb'd eternally before her.

I have observed, that CERVANTES always esteems in his Cavaliers, a probable Merit, but he never fails to lash, in good earnest, their fabulous Combats, and their ridiculous Penances. Upon this last consideration, he prefers DON GALAOR, to the honest AMADIS DE GAULE, *Porque tenia muy acomodada condicion para todo ; que no era Cavallero melindroso, ni tan lloron como su hermano* *.

One

* Because he was a man who wou'd dispense with any thing, neither was he so finical, nor such a whining Lover as his Brother. CERVANTES in his Don Quixot, Vol. I. Chap. 11.

One great fault of Authors in their Tragedies, is, that they employ one Passion for another: as for instance, they make it to be Grief, where it ought only to be Tenderneſs; and on the contrary, they introduce Deſpair, when it ſhould be Grief. QUINAUT, in his Tragedies, is frequently tender, where he ought to grieve in good earneſt. In the *Titus* of RACINE, you find Deſpair, where there is ſcarce occaſion for bare Grief. Hiſtory informs us, that TITUS, who was a cautious prudent Prince, ſent back BERENICE to Judea, that he might not give the leaſt offence to the people of Rome; but the Poet makes a deſperate Lover of him, who is reſolved to kill himſelf, rather than conſent to this ſeparation.

CORNEILLE is equally faulty in his *Titus*³. He repreſents him as ready to leave Rome, and throw up the Empire, to go and make love in Judea. In this he treſpaſſes directly againſt Truth and Probability, deſtroying the character both of the private Man and the Emperor, only to aſcribe every thing to a Paſſion that was extinguiſh'd. In ſhort, he makes this Prince perfectly beſotted on BERENICE, whereas he parted from her either as a wiſe Man, or a diſgusted Lover. I own, indeed, that there are certain occaſions, wherein good Senſe, and even Reaſon it ſelf, allows us Paſſion, and in thoſe caſes Paſſion ought to carry it above the Character. HORACE would have us repreſent ACHILLES active, cholerick, inexorable, one that look'd upon himſelf ſubject to no Laws, and owning in his undertakings no other right but what his Sword gave him⁴; but then we are to conſider,

³ In his Heroical Comedy, Entitled, TITUS AND BERENICE.

⁴ Aut ſamam ſequere, aut ſibi convenientia ſinge
Scriptor. Honoratum ſi fortè reponis Achillem;

der, that he is only to be painted so in his ordinary temper. This is the Character which HOMER gives him, when he contends for his fair Captive with AGAMEMNON: nevertheless, neither HOMER nor HORACE would have us extinguish all humanity in ACHILLES; and EURIPIDES was certainly in the wrong to give him so little love for IPHIGENIA, just upon the point when she was going to be sacrificed⁵. The Priest seem'd to be touch'd with Compassion, and the Lover appear'd as it were insensible. If he shews Anger, it results from his temper, not from his affection for IPHIGENIA. It will be granted me, on all hands, that Humanity demanded Pity; that Nature, and even good Manners requir'd Tenderness; and all persons of a true taste will blame this Poet, for laying too great a stress upon the Character of his Hero, when he ought to have made some allowances to Passion. But when a Passion is generally known, we ought to ascribe as little as we can to the Character of the person.

For instance, if you were to describe MARK ANTHONY, after he had abandon'd himself to his love, you ought not to paint him with those shining qualities which nature bestow'd upon him. ANTHONY besotted with CLEOPATRA, is not ANTHONY the friend of CESAR. Of a brave, bold, active man, he is become a weak, effeminate, lazy, whining wretch. Of a man who had in no respect been wanting, either to his Interest, or to his Party; we find him wanting to himself, and utterly undone by himself.

HORACE,

Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
Jura neget sibi data, nihil non arroget armis.

Hor. de Art. Poet. v. 119—122,

⁵ This is one of Grotius's Thoughts.

HORACE, whom I mention'd a little above, has laid down the Character of old Age, which he advises us carefully to observe. If we have an Old Man to represent, he would have us draw him heaping up riches, yet denying himself the use of them, cold, timorous, peevish, melancholy, dissatisfied with the present times, and a zealous admirer of what he saw when he was a young fellow ⁶. However, if we are to introduce an old man who is passionately in Love, we must not give him either coldness, or fear, or laziness, or melancholy: we must make him liberal instead of covetous, and complaisant instead of morose or surly: he must find fault with all the Beauties he has seen, and only admire that which enslaves him at present; he must do every thing for his Mistress, and govern himself by no other will but hers, as thinking to obtain by his submission, whatever he loses by the disadvantage of his Age:

*He thinks the low Submission by him shown,
Will for his Age and Impotence atone⁷.*

Such an one was in effect, and as such, has been painted by CORNEILLE, the old and unfortunate SYPHAX. Before he was charm'd by SOPHONISBA, he held the Ballance between the Carthaginians and the Romans: no sooner did he become a Lover in his old days, but he lost his

H 4

Domi-

⁶ Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda; vel quòd
Quærit, & inventis miser abstinere, ac timet uti;
Vel quòd res omnes timidè, gelidèque ministrat,
Dilator, spe longus, iners, avidusque futuri,
Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti
Se puero, censor, castigatore minorum.

Hor. de Art. Poet. v. 169—174.

⁷ Corneille's SOPHONISBA.

Dominions, and himself together, for resigning himself to a Woman's will.

When I use the word Passion, 'tis Love I mean: for all the other passions serve to form the Character instead of destroying it. To be naturally gay, melancholy, cholerick, and fearful, is to have Humours, Qualities and Affections that compose a Character: to be very much in love, is to take up a Passion which not only destroys the qualities of a Character, but likewise commands the motions of other qualities. 'Tis certain, that they who truly love, are never hurried to any other passions, but according as they humour and strike in with their love. If they have any indignation against a Lover, love both provokes and pacifies them; they intend hatred, and can't cease loving; Love excuses Ingratitude, and justifies Infidelity. The very torments of a true passion are Pleasures; we feel the Pains of it only when it is past, just as after the Delirium of a Fever we feel the pain occasion'd by it. In loving well, we are never miserable, but we think our selves to be so, when we cease to love.

*A beauteous she, with all her pow'r,
Can't make us wretched for an hour:
Tho we must never hope for the possessing,
Her charms are favours, and her sight's a blessing.*



To



*To an Author who ask'd my Opinion
of a Play, where the Heroine does
nothing but lament her self.*

THE Princess you make the Heroine of your Play, would have pleas'd me well enough, had you manag'd her Tears with more frugality : but you make her shed them so prodigally, that when the Audience come to themselves, this profusion of Tears, cannot but make the person whom you represent less affecting ; and those that behold the Representation less sensible. CORNEILLE has had the misfortune, to disgust the generality of his spectators in his latter days ; because he must needs discover that which is most hidden in our Hearts ; that which is most exquisite in the Passions ; and most delicate in the Thoughts. After he had, as it were, worn out the ordinary Passions with which we are agitated, he was in hopes of gaining a new reputation, if he touch'd our most conceal'd Tenderneſſes, our nicest Jealousies, and our most secret Grievs : but this studied penetration, being too delicate for great Assemblies, so precious and painful a discovery has made him lose some esteem in the world, whereas it ought to have procured him new applause.

'Tis certain, that no man understood Nature better than CORNEILLE : but he has described it differently, according to the different periods of his life. When he was young, he contented himself with describing its motions : when he was old, he
was

was for discovering its most secret springs. Formerly, he ascrib'd every thing to the Sentiment ; at present, Penetration does every thing with him : now, he opens the Heart, and its most conceal'd recesses ; whereas he formerly represented it with all its anxieties and agitations. Other Authors have succeeded better in complying with the present humour of the Age, which loves nothing but Grief and Tenderness upon the Theatre : but I am afraid your Tragedy will contribute to rectify the depraved palate of the Town, and that the Audience will nauseate the insupportable excess of a Passion, which has the good fortune at present to please.

I own that nothing is so moving, as the lively representation of a beautiful Person in distress ; 'tis a new sort of a Charm, that unites every thing that is tender within us, by impressions of Love and Pity mingled together. But if the fair Lady continues to bewail her misfortunes too long, that which at first affected us, makes us sad ; and as we are soon weary of comforting one who takes a pleasure in whining and complaining, we leave her as a troublesome creature, in the hands of old Women and Relations, who know how to manage one in this sad condition, by the receiv'd rules of condoling.

A Writer who thorowly understands the Passions, will never exhaust his stock of Grief, because this profusion must naturally create an indolence in the Spectators, which will infallibly end in a general dislike. The first Tears are natural to the Passion which we express ; they have their source in the heart, and convey grief from an afflicted to a tender heart. The latter are purely owing to the Poet's wit ; Art has produced them, and therefore Nature will not own them. Affliction ought to have something that is moving, and the end of Affliction something that is animated, in order to
make

make a new impressi^on upon us. 'Tis likewise requisite that it terminate by good Fortune, which finishes misfortunes by Joy, or by a great Virtue, which draws our Admiration. Sometimes it ends in Death, and from thence arises in our souls a Commiseration, proper and natural to Tragedy : but this never ought to be after long Lamentations, which gives us more disgust for the weakness of the person represented, than compassion for his misfortunes.

I cannot endure to see a dying Person upon the Stage, who is more lamented by him that dies, than by the Spectators that see him die. I love great Grievs, attended with few Complaints, but deep Concern : I love a Despair which does not waste it self in words, but where Nature is overcome, and sinks under the violence of the Passion. Long tedious discourses rather shew our desire of life, than our resolutions to die ; to speak much upon these occasions, is to languish in Despair, and to lose all the merit of one's grief :

O Silvia, tu se' morta,

and to swoon away like AMINTA¹ ;

I don't weep, Madam, but I die² ;

and to expire like EURYDICE.

Our misfortunes are certainly alleviated by tears and lamenting : and the greatest pain in the world, when it begins to abate, increases our desires of living, in proportion as it lessens. It falls out with our reasoning, as it does with our tears : if we reason never so little in our afflictions, reason will rather advise

¹ AMINTA of Tasso, *Act. III. Scene II.*

² SURENA, one of Corneille's Tragedies, *Act. V. Sc. V.*

advise us to bear them, than to die. Let us relieve on the Theatre those Persons whom we represent lamenting and grieving so excessively: let us bestow more Calamities than Tears and long Discourses, on those who we design should die there.

A LETTER

TO

THE COUNT DE LIONNE.

AS irksom and heavy as my Disgraces are, yet I find some alleviation, when I find a person of so much honour as your self, who has the tenderness to pity them, and the generosity to endeavour to put an end to them. I am infinitely oblig'd to Madam * * * for her kindness, and to you for your zealous endeavours: but I should be glad that, for the future, no body would stir up Count DE LAUZUN to serve me; for I am sure he'll do, of his own accord, all that shall lie in his power for me, without doing himself hurt; and I should be very sorry to draw upon him the least mortification. He ought to entertain his Master with nothing but what's agreeable, and hear nothing from him, but what brings him some satisfaction. For, when a Master has once begun to refuse, he easily gets a habit of not granting what's ask'd of him. I have heard a great Courtier say, that *a man ought very carefully to avoid the first repulse;*

pulse ; and I should be very sorry to have occasion'd one, to a person I honour so highly, as I do Count LAUZUN.

Not but that I lie under a sort of necessity of going to France, for two Months, unless I will resolve to lose the little I have there, and all that makes me subsist in foreign Countries. There is, as I take it, about forty thousand Livres still due to me, of which I can get nothing : however, I fear more than want the Relief of Nature, which might put an end to the ill treatments I receive from Fortune. I am tormented with devilish Vapours ; but as soon as they are over, I am as merry as ever. In one hour, all that is sad, and all that is pleasant, presents it self, by turns, to my imagination : so that I am more sensibly affected with the effects of Humour, than by the power of Reason. I should easily fall to moralizing ; which is the inclination of all the unfortunate, whose imagination is generally taken up either with melancholy, or, at least, serious thoughts. As I fear the ridicule that attends Gravity, I stop short, to tell you only, Sir, that no man is more absolutely yours, &c.

I beseech you, when occasion offers, to assure Madam *** of my most humble acknowledgments, for all her kindneses.

Since I had the honour to write to you last, I have pass'd my tedious hours in trifles. I have made some *Observations on our Historians ; on Tragedy, and on the Spanish, French, Italian, and English Comedy ; on Operas, &c.* But these were only particular Observations, without much Design or Regularity, tho grounded on the different Genius of those respective Nations. I have lost part of them, and the rest is still in confusion : however, such as it is, I shall transmit it to you. You will infinitely oblige me to send me all that's new, provided it be curious, and scarce.



A

DISCOURSE

UPON THE

FRENCH HISTORIANS.

IT must be acknowledg'd, that the greatest part of our *Historians*, are Men of an indifferent merit; and were it not for the natural desire of knowing what has happen'd in one's own Country, I can't imagine how any person, that has been conversant in antient History, could ever bear the tediousness of ours. 'Tis certainly very surprizing, that in a Monarchy, where there have been so many memorable Wars, and so many signal Revolutions; that amongst a People that wants neither Courage to perform things, nor the Vanity to talk of them, there should not rise up one Historian, who answers either the dignity of the Subject, or our own inclination.

I was formerly of opinion, that we ought to charge this defect on our Language; but when I afterwards consider'd, that the beauty of the French, in our Translations, almost equall'd that of the Greek and Latin, in the Originals, I cou'd not help thinking with my self, that the meanness of our Genius falls vastly short of the Majesty of History. Besides, altho we had among us some persons of an elevated mind and great Abilities, yet there are

too many things necessary to the Composition of a just History, to be met with in one and the same Person. We might find perhaps a Style pure and elevated enough in some of our Authors, who by reason of their living at a distance from the Court and Business, would run into general Maxims, and Common-places, which relish more of the Politicks of Antiquity, than our own. On the other hand, our Men of Business and Experience, are well acquainted, 'tis true, with our Interests; but they lie under the disadvantage of being used to an Epistolary Style, which as it is proper for Negotiations, so it does not come up to the dignity of History. 'Tis likewise a usual thing with them, to speak improperly of War; unless their fortune led them formerly to a Camp, or they lived in the confidence and familiarity of great men, who had the management of military Affairs. This is a considerable defect in GROTIUS, who after he has penetrated into the most secret causes of the War, the nature of the Government of the Spaniards, and the disposition of the People of Flanders; who, after he has enter'd into the true Genius of Nations; form'd a just Character of Societies, and principal Persons; has so well explain'd the different state of Religion; and trac'd up things to Originals, unknown to Cardinal BENTIVOGLIO, and STRADA, cannot maintain the admiration which he caused in us, so soon as he begins to open the scene of War; speaks of the motions of Armies, describes Sieges, and relates Battles.

We have among us Persons of Quality of an extraordinary merit, who having pass'd thro' great Employments, by the help of good natural parts, and some acquir'd knowledge, are equally capable of acting, and speaking well; but, generally, they either want a Genius, or have not the art of writing: besides that, being wholly taken up with the
Court,

Court, and the function of their Offices, they don't endeavour to instruct themselves in the forms of the Government, and orders of the Kingdom. They would be apt to imagine, that they debased themselves, and took the business of the Gentlemen of the Long Robe upon them, against the dignity of their Profession, if they should apply themselves to the knowledge of our principal Laws. Tho without these lights, I am assur'd it is in a manner impossible to make a good History, filled as it ought to be, with sound and judicious Instructions.

My Lord BACON often complains, that Historians take pleasure in enlarging on foreign Affairs, and seem purposely to avoid those Statutes to which the publick Tranquillity is owing, as if this would make the Narration languish : and that indulging themselves with pleasure in the recital of those Calamities which war occasions, they don't, without a sensible distaste, treat of the good Laws, which establish the happiness of civil Society. His complaints appear to me the better grounded, because there is not one History among the Romans, where we cannot discover the inside of the Republick, by its Laws, as well as the outside by its Conquests. You find in LIVY, sometimes the repealing of old Laws, and sometimes the sanction of new ones ; in him you see every thing that depends on Religion, and relates to Ceremonies. The Conspiracy of CATILINE in SALLUST, is all along fill'd with matters relating to the Constitution of the Republick ; and that ingenious and artful speech of CESAR, doth it not wholly run upon the *Portian* Law ; upon the just considerations their Ancestors had, to lay aside the ancient rigour in the punishment of Citizens ; and upon the dangerous consequences that would follow, if so wise an Ordinance should be violated ?

The same CESAR, in his *Commentaries*, never loses any occasion, to speak of the Manners, Customs, and Religion of the Gauls. TACITUS is, perhaps, even to a fault, full of Accusations, Defences, Laws, and Judgments. QUINTUS CURTIUS, in a History made rather to please, than to instruct, puts the Laws of the Macedonians into ALEXANDER's mouth, to answer the reproaches of HERMOLAUS, who had conspired against his life. This ALEXANDER, that seems to have known no other law than his own will, while he was conquering the World; this very ALEXANDER, doth not disdain to support himself by the authority of the Laws, for having order'd a young Boy to be whipt, even when he was master of the Universe.

As there is no Nation but what desires to secure it self from foreign violences, when it is weak, or to render its condition more glorious by Conquests, when it is powerful; as there is none, but ought to secure its repose by the constitution of a good Government, and the tranquillity of Conscience by the impressions of Religion: so there is no Historian but ought to be instructed in all these different concerns, when he undertakes to write History; but ought to shew, what it is that renders Men unhappy, to the end it may be avoided, or what makes their happiness, that it may be pursued. Thus 'tis impossible for a man to write a good History of France, whatever Wars he is to describe, without shewing the Constitution of the Kingdom, the Difference of Religion, and the Immunities of the Gallican Church.

It would be ridiculous to undertake to write that of England, without knowing the affairs of the Parliament, and being well instructed in the different Religions of that Kingdom. No less absurd would it be to attempt that of Spain, without know-

ing exactly the various forms of its Councils, and the mystery of its Inquisition, as well as the secret of its foreign Interests, and the motives and successes of its Wars.

But, in truth, these diversities of Laws, Religion, Politicks, and War, ought to be ingeniously mingled, and very discreetly managed: for a man that wou'd often affect to speak of the Constitution and Laws of a State, would rather shew us the Legislator, or Lawyer, than the Historian. To treat of every point of Religion with a nice curiosity, would be making Lectures of Divinity; and we should scarce be able to endure this in the History of FRA PAOLO¹, did we not know that his long tiresome Controversies between the Doctors, were merely occasion'd by the necessity of his subject.

Altho the descriptions of Wars seem to bear the first place in History, yet a man would pass for a sort of a tedious Story-teller, to heap up accidents upon accidents, without any variety of matter: in short, he would manage a true subject as awkwardly, as the contrivers of old Romances did their feign'd Combats and fabulous Adventures.

The Latin Historians knew how to blend admirably well all these different parts of Knowledge I have mention'd: for the History of the Romans ought to bear some resemblance with their Lives, which were divided between the different functions of several Professions. Indeed, there were hardly any Persons of eminence at Rome, but who passed thro' the Dignities of the Priesthood; were Members of the Senate; and call'd out from thence to the command of Armies. But now every Profession takes up a man entirely. The greatest Virtue of the Clergy, is to apply themselves wholly to Ecclesiastical affairs; and those whose Ambition hath push'd

¹ *The History of the Council of Trent.*

push'd them to the management of secular Business- have met with a thousand reproaches, for corrupt, ing the sanctity of that life they were destin'd to. The Lawyers are ridicul'd so soon as they step out of their profession ; and a Soldier is, for the most part, asham'd, to know any thing beyond his business.

'Tis certain, however, that the different applications of the Ancients, formed a Capacity much more extensive ; the same persons understanding how to employ the forces of the Republick, and to keep the People within their Duty, by the awe of Religion, and the authority of the Laws. It was a great advantage to the Magistrates, that they were masters of the strongest impressions that can be made upon our minds ; and that they had the management of all those Sentiments, by which we are dispos'd to docility, or constrain'd to obedience. Nor was it less beneficial to their Generals, that they were instructed in the secrets of their Religion, to enable them to inspire their own Notions, and make them to be receiv'd with the same respect, as if they had been truly dictated by the Gods ; to have the art of turning all things into Presages of good or ill fortune ; and to know seasonably the critical time, when to fill the Soldiers with confidence or fear. But besides this, there accrued another advantage to the Republick ; which was, that by this means the Magistrates made themselves perfectly known : for it was impossible, that in these different functions, the true natural temper of a man, tho it lay never so deep, should equally conceal it self thro'out ; and that his good or ill qualities should not, at length, be discern'd. In men of a narrow genius, whom nature has restrained to a certain talent, they discover'd, that a soft and peaceable temper, which is fit enough for reli-
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gious

gious services, had not sometimes constancy enough to maintain the Law with vigour.

Sometimes it was observ'd, that a Senator was proof against Bribery in Law-trials, who had neither the activity nor vigilance of a good Commander. Such a man was a great Warrior, as MARIUS, who had no capacity for what related to Religion and Business. To speak the truth, we sometimes meet with an universal Capacity, and a consummate Virtue amongst them, which render'd some men useful to the Publick, upon all occasions whatever: but then there were also amongst them men of less extensive parts, who were only employ'd in those Affairs for which they were fit.

This was visibly seen in the Consulship of CICERO, and ANTONIUS, wherein the first was order'd to watch for the safety of the Republick, which was his proper talent; while the other was sent to assemble Troops, in conjunction with PETREIUS, to fight CATILINE.

If we reflect upon what I have said, we shall not be surpriz'd to find excellent Historians amongst a People, where those that writ History were most frequently very considerable persons, who wanted neither Genius, nor the Art of writing well; and who possessed, in an equal measure, a profound knowledge of the Affairs of Religion, War, and Men. 'Tis certain, the Antients had a great advantage over us, in knowing the genius of Men, by the different trials thro' which they were obliged to pass, before they came to the administration of the Commonwealth; neither were they wanting to paint and describe them to the life; for whoever will examine their Characters, with a little curiosity and skill, will discover a particular study in all this, and an Art deeply laid.

In

In effect, you will find that they put together, as it were, opposite qualities, which a man would never imagine, at first sight, to find in one and the same person: *animus audax, subdolus*. You see them make a difference in certain qualities, which appear to be absolutely the same, and which one cannot discover without a great nicety of discernment: *subdolus, varius, cujuslibet rei simulator, ac dissimulator* ².

There is another diversity in the Characters of the Antients, more curious, and yet is less known to us, *viz.* a certain difference, wherewith each Vice, or Virtue is mark'd, by the particular impression it makes in the minds where it is. For example, the Courage of *ALCIBIADES* hath something singular in it, to distinguish it from that of *EPAMINONDAS*, altho both of them despis'd death alike. The Integrity of *CATO*, is different from that of *CATULUS*; the Daringness of *CATILINE*, is not the same with that of *ANTHONY*; the Ambition of *SYLLA*, and that of *CE-SAR*, have not a perfect resemblance: for which reason, when the Antients form the Characters of their Great Men, they form at the same time the Character of the Qualities they assign to them, that they may appear not only ambitious and daring, or moderate and prudent; but that we may know more particularly, what sort of Ambition and Courage, or Moderation and Prudence they had.

SALLUST ³ describes *CATILINE* as a person of a wicked disposition; and the wickedness of his temper is immediately expressed: *sed ingenio malo, pravoque*. The particular kind of his Ambition is distinguish'd by the irregularity of his Morals; and

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that

² *Sallust in the Character of Catiline.*

³ See the Observations on Sallust, and Tacitus, Vol. I. p. 224.

that Irregularity is shewn by the Character of his Mind, whose imaginations were too vast, and too high: *vastus animus immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta semper cupiebat*. He had a Temper wicked enough to undertake any thing against the Laws, and too vast a Soul to fix himself to designs proportion'd to the means, by which they use to succeed.

The bold Spirit of a voluptuous and lewd Woman, such as SEMPRONIA was, might indeed make one believe, that her Boldness would undertake any thing, to carry on her Amours: but as this sort of Daringness is not very proper for dangers, to which one is expos'd in a Conspiracy, SALLUST presently explains what she was capable of doing, by telling us what she had done before: *quæ multa sæpe virilis audaciæ facinora commiserat*. Here is the Species of her Daringness express'd. He makes her dance and sing, not with the Fashions, Gestures, and Motions, which the singing and dancing Women at Rome used, but with more art and curiosity than became a virtuous woman: *psallere, saltare elegantius, quam necesse est probæ*. When he ascribes Wit to her, he tells us at the same time, wherein the merit of it consisted: *verum, ingenium ejus haud absurdum; posse versus facere, jocos movere, sermone uti, vel modesto, vel molli, vel procaci*.

You will find by the Character of SYLLA, that his Temper happily suited with his Designs. The Republick, at that time, being divided into Factions, those that aspired to Power had no nearer concern than to acquire friends; and SYLLA took no greater pleasure than to get them. Liberality is the best way to gain Affection: and SYLLA knew how to part with every thing. Amongst the things we bestow, nothing enslaves men more, and secures so much their Service to us, as the Money we give them; and in this the Liberality of SYLLA was particularly

cularly seen : *rerum omnium, pecuniæ maximè, largitor*⁴. He was liberal in his own nature ; liberal of his money, out of interest. His Leisure was voluptuous ; but an Historian had given us a wrong idea of this great man, had he describ'd him with sensuality or laziness : this obliges SALLUST to represent it as the Pleasure of a Gentleman, subordinate to glory, which never retards the dispatch of business ; lest we should mistake it for a softness, in which the effeminate generally languish : *cupidus voluptatum, gloriæ cupidior ; otio luxurioso esse, tamen ab negotiis nunquam voluptas remorata*. He was the happiest man in the world, before the Civil War, but this happiness was not the pure effect of chance ; and his Fortune, as great as it always was, ever came short of his Industry : *atque illi, felicissimo omnium ante civilem victoriam, nunquam super industriam fortuna fuit*.

When TACITUS describes PETRONIUS to us, he distinguishes the Qualities he bestows upon him in the like manner : he makes him consume his wealth, not like a profuse spendthrift in Debauchery, but like a delicate person, in a polite and refin'd Luxury. The Contempt of Death, which he ascribes to him, hath nothing common with that, which the other Romans had. It is not the steddly Gravity of THRASEAS, who read a Lecture to the Messenger, that brought to him the Death-warrant : it is not the forc'd Constancy of SENECA, who is oblig'd to encourage himself, by the remembrance of his own Precepts and Discourses : it is not that affected Bravery, upon which HELVIDIUS valued himself : in short it is not a resolution grounded upon the opinions of Philosophers ; 'tis a soft and careless Indifference, which left in his Soul no

⁴ Sallust's words are : *multarum rerum ac maxime pecuniæ largitor*.

room for the dismal thoughts of Death; it is a continuation of the ordinary course of his Life to the last moment^s.

But if the Ancients shew'd so great a niceness in marking these Differences, they discover no less art in the Stile of their Characters, to oblige us to take the more notice of them. In their Narrations they engage us to follow them by the insensible charms of an agreeable and natural tale. They hurry us along in their Orations, by the vehemence of their discourse, lest if we continued calm and unmoved, it might make us discover what a want of good Sense there is, amidst all this Pomp of Eloquence; and afford us leisure secretly to resolve not to be persuaded by it. Sometimes, at a Consultation, they bring reasons upon reasons, to determine the unresolved to that Party they would have them embrace: but in Characters where we should discern Vices and Virtues; where we should sort the Differences which meet in one and the same man; where we should not only distinguish the different Qualities, but the Differences likewise by which each Quality is characteriz'd; we ought not to use a warm declamatory Style, nor urge arguments one upon the neck of another, either to hurry away, or captivate the understanding. On the contrary, we ought to stand upon our guard, and secure our selves from whatever appears to have a design upon our Reason; which we must preserve free and unbiass'd; we ought likewise diligently to scan every word in an abrupt Style, when the words will admit of a various construction, lest we should lose our selves in too general Considerations. In order to that, the Reader is oblig'd to bestow his utmost

^s See the Judgment upon Seneca, Plutarch, and Petronius, Vol. I. pag. 158 & seq.

most attention on the different singularities, and to examine separately each feature in the Picture.

'Tis thus the Ancients form'd their Characters. As for us, if we were to describe a Temper like that of CATILINE, we should be at a loss to conceive in one and the same Person, Qualities which appear to be opposite. So much Boldness, with so great Artifice; so much Pride, and so much Policy; so much fire and impetuosity in his desires, joyn'd to so much fraud and dissimulation.

There is a nice difference between Qualities, that seem to be the same, which 'tis difficult to discover. There is sometimes a mixture of Vice and Virtue in one single Quality, which we never truly separate. It is easy for us, indeed, to know Virtues, when they are pure and entire; and so, for the most part, we allow prudence in councils; quickness in execution; and valour in battels. And as for Morals, we confine them to Piety towards God; Integrity with men, and fidelity to our friends, or to our superiors. We make the same use both of Defects and Vices; and so we talk of incapacity in affairs; of baseness towards enemies; of infidelity to friends; of idleness, avarice, and ingratitude: but where Nature hath not left great purity in Virtues, where she has left some mixture of Virtue amongst Vices, we want sometimes penetration to discover what lies concealed; sometimes a nice discernment to disentangle what is confus'd.

Those particular distinctions, which variously denote the Qualities, according to the Men who possess them, are yet more remote from our knowledge. The diversity of Valour is unknown to us: we have but one Courage for all the valiant; one Ambition for all the ambitious; one Honesty for all good men; and, to speak truth, the character of a Person of great desert, as we generally draw it, may as well fit all the Men of merit now living,
If

If we were to speak of those Dukes of *GUISE*, whose fame will be immortal, we should call them valiant, generous, liberal, ambitious, zealous for the Catholick Religion, and profess'd enemies of the Protestants: but as this would not sufficiently distinguish the Qualities of one from the other, their Characters, consequently, would not be so distinguish'd as they ought to be. Those Virtues, which Morality and general Discourses represent to us as the same, assume a different Air, by the difference of the humour and genius of the persons that possess them.

We judge right enough, that the Constable⁶, and the Admiral⁷, were capable of sustaining the most important Affairs; but the difference of their capacity is not sufficiently mark'd by our Authors. They acquaint us that *ANDELOT*⁸, *BUSSE*⁹, and *GIVRY*¹⁰, were the stoutest men in the world: but they do not tell us that there was a factious obstinacy in *ANDELOT*'s Daringness; that there appear'd something vain and audacious in *BUSSE*'s Bravery; and that *GIVRY*'s Valour had ever the air of Knight-Errantry.

There is something peculiar in men's Courages that distinguishes them, as well as some singularity in their minds, that makes a difference between them. The Courage of the Mareschal *DE CHA-*
TILLON

⁶ *Anne de Montmorenci, Constable of France. He died in the year 1567.*

⁷ *Gaspard de Coligni, Admiral of France, murder'd at Paris in the general Massacre of the Protestants, in 1572.*

⁸ *Francis de Coligny, Lord of Andelot. Brother to Admiral Coligni. He died in 1569.*

⁹ *Lewis d'Amboise, Lord of Bussy, &c. He was assassinated by the Count of Monforeau, for an intrigue with his Wife, in 1580.*

¹⁰ *De Longvic, Lord of Givry. He was killed at the Siege of Laon in 1594.*

TILLON¹¹ was a slow and lazy intrepidity : that of the Marechal DE LA MEILLERAYE¹² was attended with a heat very proper to press a Siege, and a passion which disorder'd him in a pitch'd Bat-tel. The Valour of the Marechal DE RENZAU¹³, was admirable for great Actions ; it could save a Province, it could preserve an Army : but one would have thought, that it esteemed common Dangers below it self, to have beheld it so remiss in little and frequent occasions, where common service was perform'd. That of the Marechal DE GASSION¹⁴, more lively and active, might have been useful at all moments ; there was not a day, wherein it gave not to our troops some advantage over the enemy. 'Tis true, it was not so well compos'd, when any thing of great Importance lay at stake. This Marechal, who had so often ventur'd himself in falling upon Parties ; who was so brisk in charging the Rear of an Army, fear'd an entire engagement, being wholly taken up with the thoughts of events, when it was more necessary to act, than to think.

Sometimes we ascribe every thing to Qualities, without considering what Humour mixes with them. Sometimes we allow too much to Humour, and don't sufficiently examine the depth of Qualities. The thoughtful meditating temper of Monsieur DE TURENNE, who was still forming and weighing designs in his head, made him pass for timorous, irresolute, and uncertain ; altho he gave battle with
as

¹¹ *Gaspard de Coligni, Marechal of France. He died in the year 1646.*

¹² *Charles de la Porte, Duke of la Meilleraye, Marechal of France. He died in 1664.*

¹³ *Jostas, Count of Rantzau, of the illustrious Family of Rantzau in the Dutchy of Holstein, Marechal of France. He died in 1650.*

¹⁴ *John de Gassion, Marechal of France. He died in 1647, of a wound he received in the Siege of Lens.*

as much alacrity, as Monsieur DE GASSION went to a skirmish. And the natural heat of the Prince of CONDE', made him be thought impetuous in Battels; tho he was master of himself more than any person whatever, in the heat of action; and had more presence of mind at Lens, Friburgh, Nortlingen, and Senef, than he would, perhaps, have had in his Closet.

After so long a Discourse upon the Knowledge of Men, I will affirm, that our Historians have not sufficiently shewn their talent that way, for want of application and judgment to know Men aright. They imagin'd, that a faithful narration of Events was sufficient to instruct us, without considering that affairs are done by men who are oftner transported by Passion, than conducted by Policy. Prudence governs the wise; but there are but a few of that sort, and the most wise are not so at all times: whereas Passion governs almost all the world, and at most times.

In Commonwealths, where the Maxims of true Interest ought to be better pursued, we see most things carried on by a spirit of Faction, and all Factions are passionate. Passion is found every where, and the zeal of the best persons is not free from it. The Animosity of CATO and CESAR; and the Fury of CICERO against ANTHONY, no less contributed to the ruin of Liberty, than the ambition of those that set up Tyranny. The opposition of two great men, equally, but differently, zealous for the good of Holland, had like to have destroy'd it, when it had nothing to fear from the Spaniards. Prince MAURICE would have it powerful abroad; BARNEVELT would have it free at home. The first put it into a condition to cope with a King of Spain; the second endeavour'd to secure it against a Prince of ORANGE. It cost BARNEVELT his life; and what frequently enough happens, the sticklers for Liberty were destroy'd even by the People.

I pass from observations upon History, to reflections upon Politicks : perhaps I may be pardon'd for so doing ; but let their reception be what it will, I shall satisfy my self.

In the first establishment of a Republick, the love of Liberty is the chief virtue of the citizens, and the jealousy which it inspires, makes up the principal Policy of the State. As men grow weary of the troubles, perplexities, and dangers, which they must undergo to live always independent, they follow any ambitious man that pleases them, and fall easily from a troublesom Liberty, to an agreeable Subjection. I remember what I have often said in Holland, and even to the Pensioner¹⁵ himself, that men were mistaken as to the temper of the Hollanders. The world believes, that the Hollanders love Liberty ; whereas they only hate Oppression. There are amongst them few proud, haughty spirits ; and 'tis pride and haughtiness that makes the true Republican. The People there would be apprehensive either of a covetous Prince, who should be able to take away their estates ; or of a violent Prince, who should offer outrages to them : but the name or title of Prince, is what they submit to with pleasure. If they love the Republick, 'tis for the benefit of their Trade, more than for any satisfaction they find in being free. The Magistrates love to be independent, to govern those that depend on them : as for the People, they would more easily acknowledge the authority of the Prince, than that of the Magistrates. 'Tis true, that when a Prince of ORANGE had a design to surprize Amsterdam, all declared for the Burgomasters ; but that was rather out of a hatred of Violence, than love of Liberty. When another opposed a Peace¹⁶, after a long expensive

¹⁵ *Monsieur de Wit.*

¹⁶ *The Peace of Nimeguen.*

penfive War, a Peace was made in spite of him : but it was done thro' a sense of the present misery ; and the respect they had naturally for him, was only suspended, not destroyed. When these extraordinary strokes were over, they return'd to the Prince of ORANGE. The Republicans had the dissatisfaction to see the People take up their first Affections, and they apprehended a despotical Government, without daring to appear jealous of Liberty.

When the Prince of ORANGE had neither post nor office in the Government, when he had nothing but his own name to support him, the Pensioner, and Monsieur DE NOORTWICK were the only persons, that durst boldly pronounce the Word *Republick* at the Hague. The Family of ORANGE had other Enemies enough ; but these enemies always spoke of the States in general expressions, which did not explain the Constitution of Government.

Holland, says GROTIUS, is a Republick made by chance, which is kept up by their fear of the Spaniards : *Respublica casu facta, quam metus Hispanorum continet*. The apprehensions which France now gives them, produces the same effect ; and the necessity of a good Intelligence unites the Prince to the States, and the States to the Prince. But to judge of things by themselves, the Hollanders are neither free, nor slaves. Their Government is made up of several pieces, very slightly tack'd together ; where the power of the Prince, and the liberty of the People, have equal need of artificial props to support themselves.

Let us now come to what concerns Courts, and reflect upon the effects that Passions occasion there.

M. DE ST. EVREMOND. 143

In what Court have not the Women had an Interest, and in what Intrigues are they not concern'd? Did not the Princess of Eboly manage all under PHILIP II; as prudent and politick as he was? Did not the Ladies take off HENRY the Great¹⁷, from a War happily begun; and did they not engage him in one both uncertain and dangerous, just before he was kill'd? A pique between Cardinal RICHELIEU, and the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, about the Superscription of a Letter, arm'd England against France. Madam DE CHEVREUSE has play'd a hundred Engines, both at home and abroad. And did not the Countess of CARLISLE, from the inmost recesses of Whitehall, animate all the Factions of Westminster¹⁸?

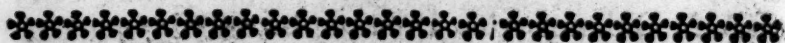
'Tis a Consolation for us to find, that those who have a Right to govern us, carry the same Infirmities about them as we do; and 'tis a great Delight to those that are distinguished by Power, to be made for Pleasure as well as we.

¹⁷ Henry IV. King of France.

¹⁸ See the Life of M. de St. Evremond, under the year 1676.



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REFLECTIONS

UPON THE

FRENCH TRANSLATORS.

THE performances of our Translators, are generally esteem'd by all the world. Not that our ABLANCOURT, is to be commended for being critically faithful to his Original: but we must admire the agreeable force of his Expression, in which we find nothing harsh or obscure. You cannot say there is one single word wanting in him, for the clearness of the sense. And on the other hand, nothing is superfluous in him: nothing that is disgustful, nothing that can be par'd off without maiming him. Every word is, as it were, measured, to make the Period exact, and yet the Style does not appear less natural for it; tho a Syllable more or less, would ruin that harmony, I know not how to describe, which is as agreeable to the ear, as that of Verse. But, in my opinion, he is oblig'd for these advantages, to the style of the Antients, which rules his own; for so soon as he returns from their Genius to his own, as in his Prefaces and Letters, he loses the best part of all these beauties: and he who is an admirable Author, whilst he is animated by the Spirit of the Greeks and Latins, becomes but an indifferent Writer, when he is only supported by himself. The same happens to the greatest part of our Translators,

tors, who, in my opinion, seem'd sufficiently convinc'd of their own Sterility, by making Translation their business: for certainly, a man that places his merit in communicating the thoughts of others, is not very confident of being capable to recommend himself by his own: however, the publick is infinitely obliged to him for the pains he takes, to bring us the wealth of foreign Countries, when our own won't suffice. I am not of the humour of a certain Person of Quality of my acquaintance, who is a declared enemy to all Translations. He is a learned and ingenious Spaniard^r, who cannot endure that what he has learn'd among the Antients, at so great an expence of time and labour, should be prostituted to the laziness of every common Reader.

As for me, besides that I improve in a thousand places, by the laborious enquiries of Translators, I should be glad to see the knowledge of Antiquity become more general; and am well pleas'd to find those Authors admir'd by those very persons who would have call'd us Pedants, if we had mention'd them in company, when they did not understand them. I therefore join my acknowledgment to that of the Publick; but do not part with my esteem, and can be very liberal of my praises for the Translation, when I shall be very sparing of them for the Genius of the Translator. I can set a high value on the Versions of ABLANCOURT, VAUGELAS, DU RYER, and many others, without having any great esteem for their Wit, if they have not discover'd it by something of their own composing.

We have the Versions of two Latin Poems in French Verse, which deserve to be as much consider'd for their beauty, as for the difficulty of the

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attempt.

^r Don Antonio de Cordova, Favourite of Don Juan, and Lieutenant General of the Spanish Horse in Flanders.

attempt. That of BREBEUF has been generally esteem'd; and I am neither so splenetick, nor so severe, as to oppose the reputation it has got in the world. I will observe, nevertheless, that he hath carried the heat of LUCAN in our language, farther than it goes in his own; and that by attempting to equal the fire of his Poem, he has, if I may be allow'd the Expression, fired himself much more. This is what happens to BREBEUF very frequently, but he flags sometimes; and when LUCAN happily hits on the true beauty of a thought, the Translator falls much below him; as if he had a mind to appear easy and natural, when he might be allow'd to exert all his force. You may observe a hundred times the truth of my first Observation; and the second will not appear less just to you in some places: for example, when BREBEUF is to render,

Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catoni,

He says no more than, *The Gods serve CESAR, and CATO follows POMPEY*: which mean Expression does not answer the nobleness of the Latin; besides, that it maims the sense of the Author: for LUCAN, who had his imagination full of the Virtue of CATO, intended to raise him above the Gods, as to the merit of the cause, which occasion'd the opposition; and BREBEUF turns a noble image of CATO raised above the Gods, into that of CATO subjected to POMPEY.

As for SEGRAIS, he comes infinitely short of VIRGIL, which he frankly acknowledges himself; and indeed it would be next to a miracle, to be able to make a Translation equal to so excellent an Original. Besides, one of the greatest advantages of that Poet, consists in the beauty of the Expression, which sure it must be impossible to equal in

our language, since it could never be done in his own. SEGRAIS ought to content himself with having found out the Genius of VIRGIL, better than any of our Authors; for whatever Graces the *Æneis* has lost in his hands, I dare affirm, that it by far surpasses all those Poems, which our Countrymen have published with more confidence than success.

The great application of SEGRAIS, to find out the Genius of the Poet, appears no less in his Preface than in the Translation; and in my opinion, he has judg'd well of the whole, except the Characters. In that I cannot be of his opinion; and he must pardon me, if I have been displeas'd a thousand times with his Hero, and if I lay hold on this occasion, to examine the little merit of the good *ÆNEAS*.

Altho Conquerors usually take more care to see their orders executed upon Earth, than religiously to observe those of Heaven; yet since Italy was promis'd to this Trojan by the Gods, 'tis with reason that VIRGIL has given him a great submission to their wills: but when he describes him so devout, he ought to have bestow'd upon him a Devotion full of confidence, which may agree with the spirit and temper of Heroes; and not a scrupulous Notion of Religion, which never consists with true Valour. A General who firmly believ'd in his Gods, ought to raise the greatness of his Courage, by the hopes of their assistance: his condition would be unhappy, if his belief in them could not subsist without superstition, which at the same time would rob him of the natural use both of his understanding and his valour. Such an infatuation it was that ruin'd NICIAS, who lost the army of the Athenians, and himself too, by a credulous and superstitious opinion of the displeasure of the Gods. It far'd otherwise with ALEXANDER the Great,

who believ'd himself to be the Son of JUPITER, that he might undertake more extraordinary Actions. SCIPIO, who pretended, or thought he had a commerce with the Gods, made an advantage of it, to recover the Roman Commonwealth, and overthrow that of the Carthaginians. Ought then the Son of VENUS, assured by JUPITER of his prosperity, and future glory, to shew his Piety only in fearing danger, and in distrusting the success of every undertaking? SEGRAIS upon this defends a cause that perplexes him, and has so much affection for his Hero, that he rather chuses not to express the sense of VIRGIL in all its latitude, than frankly to lay open the shameful fears of poor ÆNEAS:

*Exemplò Æneæ solvuntur frigore membra.
Ingemit, & duplices tendens ad sydera palmas,
Talia voce refert : O terque quaterque beati,
Quis ante ora patrum, Trojæ sub mœnibus altis
Contigit oppetere² !*

I own, that these sudden qualms will seize us sometimes in spite of our selves, thro' a defect in our Constitution : but since VIRGIL had the liberty to model ÆNEAS's according to his own fancy, I wonder he should give him one susceptible of these frights. Philosophers take a pride in natural defects, when they know how to correct them by wisdom. SOCRATES was easily induc'd to confess those evil inclinations, which Philosophy taught him to conquer. But Nature ought to be all noble in Heroes ; and if by the necessity of the humane condition, it must sometimes make a false step, their Reason is employ'd in moderating transports, not in surmounting weaknesses : nay, many times,

² Virgil. *Æneid. Lib. I. v. 96—100.*

times, their impulses have something divine in them, which is above Reason. What is call'd *Irregularity* in others, is in them but a full liberty, where their souls display themselves in their utmost extent. In fine, their impetuosity makes that heroick Virtue, which forces our admiration, without paying a deference to our judgment. But mean Passions disgrace them: and if Friendship sometimes exacts fears and afflictions from them, (like those of ACHILLES for PATROCLUS, and of ALEXANDER for HEPHESTION) it is not allow'd them in their own particular dangers and misfortunes, either to shew the same fear, or make the same complaints. Now ÆNEAS knows how to fear and lament upon every occasion that concerns him: 'tis true, he doth the same for his friends; but we ought to attribute that, not so much to a noble and generous Passion, as to an inexhaustible source of apprehensions and tears, which naturally furnishes him with them, both for himself and others.

*Exemplò Æneæ solvuntur frigore membra.
Ingemit, & duplices tendens ad sidera palmas.*

Seized as he is with this Coldness thro' all his members, the first sign of life we discover in him is his groaning: then he lifts up his hands to heaven; and in all appearance would implore its succour, if the condition wherein the good Hero finds himself, would afford him strength enough to raise his mind to the Gods, and pray with some attention. His Soul, which could not apply it self to any thing, abandons it self to lamentations; and like those desolate Widows, who upon the very first trouble they meet with, wish they were in the grave with their dear Husbands, the poor ÆNEAS bewails his not having perish'd before Troy with HECTOR, and esteems them very happy, who

left their bones in the bosom of so sweet, and so dear a Country. Some people, perhaps, may believe that he says so because he envies their happiness; but I am persuaded, that 'tis for fear of the danger that threatens him.

'Tis farther to be observ'd, that all these lamentations begin almost as soon as the Storm. The Winds blow fiercely, the Air is darkned, it thunders, it lightens, the Billows swell and grow more furious: all this is neither better nor worse than what happens in all Tempests. Yet there is neither Mast split, nor Sails torn to pieces, nor Oars broken, nor Rudder lost, nor Leak made, for the water to enter the Ship; which a man should at least have waited, before he took on in earnest. For there are a thousand Boys in England, and as many Women in Holland, who would hardly shew their Amazement, where the Hero shews his Despair.

'Tis, methinks, very remarkable in VIRGIL, that the Gods should leave ÆNEAS wholly to himself, when he is upon the lamenting strain. Let him speak of the destruction of Troy, in as compassionate terms as he can, they won't interfere to moderate his Tears; but as soon as there's a great Resolution to take, or an Affair difficult to execute, they won't trust either his capacity, or his courage; and these Deities are ready upon every occasion to take that upon them, which other great men are used to undertake and execute by themselves. I know very well how necessary the intervention of the Gods is to an Epick Poem; but still that does not hinder the Poet from laying a greater stress upon the Valour of his Hero: for if the Hero is too confident, who in contempt of the Gods, will take all upon himself, certainly the God is too favourable, who in performing all, quite drowns the merit of the Hero,

No man better understood this critical management of the assistance of Heaven, and the courage of great Men, than LONGINUS. "AJAX, *says* " *he*, finding himself engaged in battle, in a terrible dark night, doth not ask JUPITER to rescue him from the danger he was in; that had been below him: he doth not ask of him a supernatural strength, to overcome with security; for then he should have had too small a share in the Victory: he only begs for *Light*, that he might be able to discern his Enemies, and to exercise against them his own valour: *da lucem ut videam*³."

The greatest fault of the *Pbarsalia*, is, that properly speaking, 'tis nothing but a History in verse, where illustrious Men perform almost all things by methods purely human. PETRONIUS had reason to blame him for it, and remarks judiciously, that *per ambages Deorumque ministeria & fabulosum sententiarum tormentum præcipitandus est liber spiritus, ut potius furentis animi vaticinatio appareat, quam religiosæ orationis sub testibus fides*. But the *Æneis* is an eternal Fable where the Gods are introduced to manage, and execute every thing. As for the good ÆNEAS, he hardly concerns himself in any important and glorious Design: 'tis enough for him, that he discharges his Conscience in the offices of a pious, tender, and compassionate man. He carries his Father on his shoulders; he conjugally laments his dear CREUSA; he causes his Nurse to be interred, and makes a funeral Pile for the trusty Pilot PALINURUS, for whom he sheds a thousand tears.

Here was a sorry Hero in Paganism, who would have made an admirable Saint among Christians, and work'd miracles plentifully. In short, he was

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fitter

³ Longinus in his *Treatise of the Sublime*, Chap. 8.

fitter to make the Founder of a religious Order, than a State. To consider him now as to his Religion, I can heartily reverence his Piety : but if I were to judge of him by the impressions that Glory makes upon him, I can never endure such a Conqueror, that affords nothing but Tears in his misfortunes, and Fears in every danger that befalls him. I cannot endure that he should become master of so delicious a Country as Italy, with qualities that were more proper to lose his own, than to subdue another's.

VIRGIL, was undoubtedly very compassionate in his temper. In my opinion, the reason why he makes the desolate Trojans complain of so many misfortunes, was because he found a secret pleasure in relenting. Had he not been of that Constitution, he would not have ascrib'd to the good *ÆNEAS* so great an affection for his dear Troy ; for Heroes easily part with the remembrance of their native Country, in Nations where they are to perform great exploits. Their Souls, wholly taken up with ideas of Glory, have no room to entertain such trifling endearments. The Trojans therefore should have been less afflicted for their misery. Military men, when they would excite our pity for their misfortunes, do, in truth, make us only despise them for their weakness. But *ÆNEAS* particularly ought to have been taken up with his great Design ; and to have diverted his thoughts from his past sufferings, upon the new settlement he was going to make : he, that was decreed to found the Greatness and Virtue of the Romans, ought to have had an elevation and magnanimity worthy of them.

In other things, *SEGRAIS* could not bestow too many commendations upon the *Æneis* ; and perhaps, I am pleas'd with the fourth and sixth Books, as much as he is himself. As for the Characters, I must own they don't affect me : and I find

find those of HOMER as lively, as those of VIRGIL flat and insipid.

And indeed, there's no man but finds himself elevated by the impresson the Character of ACHILLES makes upon him. There's no man to whom the impetuous Courage of AJAX doth not give some motion of impatience; neither is there any who is not animated, and excited by the Valour of DIOMEDES. The Rank and Gravity of AGAMEMNON, must certainly imprint a respect in every Reader. Who hath not a veneration for the consummate Experience and Wisdom of NESTOR? In whom does not the deliberate Industry of the subtle and ingenious ULYSSES raise the imagination? The unfortunate Valour of HECTOR makes him lamented by all the world: the miserable condition of old King PRIAMUS, touches the most obdurate soul; and altho Beauty has, as it were, a secret privilege to reconcile the Affections to it, yet that of PARIS and HELENA attracts nothing but our indignation, when we consider the blood it caus'd to be spilt, and the fatal misfortunes it drew after it. However it be, every thing animates in HOMER, every thing affects: but in VIRGIL, who is not tired with the good ÆNEAS, and his dear ACHATES? If you except NISUS and EURYALUS, (who, indeed, interests you in all their adventures) you must of necessity languish in the company of all the rest, such as ILIONEUS, SERGESTUS, MNESTEUS, CLOANTES, GIAS, and such other ordinary men that accompany an indifferent Leader.

Judge by this, how much we ought to admire the Poetry of VIRGIL, since in spite of the superlative virtues of the Heroes of HOMER, and the little merit of his own, the best Criticks will not allow the Latin, to be inferior the Greek Poet.



U P O N

TRAGEDIES.

I Confess we excel in Dramatical Compositions ; and, without flattering CORNEILLE, I think I may prefer many of his Tragedies before those of Antiquity. I know the antient Tragedians have had admirers in all times ; but am not so sure that the Sublime which is ascrib'd to them, is built upon a good foundation. To believe that SOPHOCLES and EURIPIDES are so admirable as we are told they are, one must fancy greater matters of their Works, than can be conceived from their Translations ; and in my opinion, Language and Expression, must have a considerable share in the beauty of their Tragedies.

Thro' all the praises which their most zealous and celebrated Advocates give them, methinks one may perceive, that Greatness, Magnificence, and above all, Dignity, were things they little understood : Wits they were indeed, but cramp'd by the frugality of a small Republick, where a necessitous Liberty was all they had to boast of. When they were oblig'd to represent the Majesty of a great King, they made horrid work with a Grandeur that was unknown to them ; because they saw nothing but low and mean objects, to which their senses were in a manner enslaved.

It

It is true, that their Poets being disgusted with these Objects, did sometimes raise themselves to what was sublime and wonderful ; but then they brought so many Gods and Goddeffes into their Tragedies, that hardly any thing human was to be found in them. What was great, was fabulous ; what was natural, mean and contemptible. In CORNEILLE, Grandeur seems to have attain'd the last perfection. The Figures he employs, when he would embellish it with any ornament, are proper and suitable : but, for the most part, he neglects the pomp of Metaphors, and does not plunder the Heavens to enrich with its spoils, what is considerable enough upon earth. His principal aim is to penetrate into the nature of things ; and the full image he gives of them, makes that impression which pleases men of sense.

Indeed, Nature is to be admir'd wherever we find it ; and when we have recourse to figurative Ornaments, with which we think to embellish our subject, 'tis many times a tacit confession, that we know not what is proper for it. To this are owing most of our Figures and Similes, which I cannot approve, unless they are rare, altogether noble, and just : otherwise 'tis nothing else but a trick in the Author to drop a subject, which he does not understand. How beautiful soever Comparisons may be, yet they suite much better with Epick Poetry, than Tragedy : in an Epick Poem the mind seeks to please it self out of its subject ; in Tragedy, the soul full of sentiments, and possess'd with passions, does not care to be interrupted by vain flashy Similes.

But let us return to the Antients, from whom we have insensibly digress'd ; and to do them justice, let us acknowledge that they have much better succeeded in expressing the Qualities of their Heroes, than in describing the magnificence of great Kings.

Kings. A confused Notion of the Grandeur of Babylon spoil'd, rather than rais'd their imagination; but they could not be impos'd upon as to Fortitude, Constancy, Justice, and Wisdom, of which they had daily instances before their eyes. Their senses being wean'd from Pomp in a mean Republick, gave their reason a greater latitude to consider Men in themselves.

Thus nothing took them off from the study of human Nature, and from applying themselves to the knowledge of Vice and Virtue, Inclinations and Tempers: hence it is that they learnt to paint their Characters so well, that juster cannot be desir'd, considering the time they liv'd in, if we will be contented to know Persons by their Actions.

CORNEILLE thought it not enough to make them act: he has dived to the very bottom of their soul, to find out the Principle of their actions; he hath descended into their heart, to see how their Passions are form'd there, and discover the most hidden springs of their motions. As for the antient Tragedians, either they neglect the Passions by applying themselves to an exact representation of the Incidents; or else they make Speeches amidst the greatest perturbations, and amuse you with moral Sentences, when you expect nothing but Confusion and Despair from them.

CORNEILLE takes notice of the principal Events, and exposes as much of the Action as decency can allow: but this is not all; he gives the Passions all the extent they require, and leads Nature, without constraining or abandoning her too much to her self. He has banish'd from the Theatre of the Antients all that was barbarous; he hath soften'd the Horror of their Drama, by some tender passions of Love judiciously interwoven. But then he takes care all along to preserve our Fear and Pity for the tragical subjects that deserve them,
without

without diverting us from real Passions, to whining tiresome Scenes of Love ; which tho varied an hundred several times, are, for all that, still the same.

As ready as I am to acknowledge the merit of this excellent Author, yet I will not pretend that none but his Pieces deserve applause on our Theatre. We have been pleased and affected with *Mariana*, *Sophonisba*, *Alcionea*, *Venceslaus*, *Stilico*, *Andromache*, *Britannicus*¹, and many others ; from whose beauty I would not be thought in the least to derogate, because I do not name them.

I avoid being tedious as much as possibly I can ; and will only add, that no Nation can dispute with us the superiority in Tragedy. As for those of the Italians, it is not worth the while to speak of them ; to name them only is enough to create a Dis taste. Their *Peter's Feast*² would make a Stoick lose all his patience ; and I never saw it acted, but I wish'd the Author of the Piece had been destroy'd with his Libertine.

There are some old English Tragedies³, which, if some things were retrench'd in them, might be made admirable Plays. In all the rest, written in those days, you see nothing but a shapeless indigested mass ; a croud of confused adventures, without any regard to Time, Place, or Decency ; where Eyes that delight in cruel fights, are fed with Murders, and Bodies weltering in Blood. Should the Poets palliate the horror of them by relations, as it is the custom in France, they would deprive the Spectators of that fight which pleases them most.

The men of better breeding among them condemn this custom, which perhaps owes its establishment

¹ *Tristan is the Author of Mariana ; Mairet of Sophonisba ; Du Ryer of Alcionea ; Rotrou of Wenceslaus ; Corneille Junior of Stilico ; Racine of Andromache and Britannicus.*

² *Call'd in English, The Libertine Destroy'd.*

³ *Such as the Catilina and the Sejanus of Ben. Johnson, &c.*

blishment to something inhuman and savage ; but an antient habit, or the humour of the Nation in general, prevails over the delicacy of a few private persons. To die, is so small a matter to the English, that they want images more ghastly than Death it self to affect them. Hence it is, that upon very good ground, we object to them, that they allow too much to their senses upon the Stage. We must also bear with the reproach they return upon us, of passing to the other extreme, when, amongst us, we admire Tragedies for the little tenderesses of Passion, which make not an impression strong enough upon the Mind. For this reason, being sometimes dissatisfy'd with a Passion ill managed, we expect a fuller emotion from the Action of our Players ; and sometimes we would have the Actor, more transported than the Poet, lend fury and despair to an ordinary agitation, and a common grief. The truth is, what ought to be tender, is, with us, generally but soft ; what ought to form pity, scarce amounts to Tenderness ; emotion serves us instead of rapture ; astonishment instead of horror. Our sentiments have not depth enough ; and Passions, when they are not thorowly work'd up, only excite imperfect motions in our souls, that neither leave them wholly to, nor transport them out of themselves.



UPON



UPON OUR
COMEDIES,

*Except those of Moliere, in which
the true spirit of Comedy is found :
and upon the SPANISH Co-
MEDY.*

AS for Comedy, which ought to be the Representation of human Life, we have, in imitation of the Spaniards, made it run altogether upon Gallantry : not considering that the Antients made it their business to represent Man's Life according to the diversity of Humours ; and that the Spaniards following their own Genius, have only painted out the Manners of Madrid in their Intrigues and Adventures.

I grant that the Comedy of the Antients might have had a more noble air, with somewhat more of Gallantry too ; but this was rather the defect of those Ages, than the fault of the Authors. Now-a-days, most of our Poets know as little what belongs to the Manners, as in those times they knew what belong'd to Gallantry. One would think that there were no more Misers, Prodigals, soft easy Tempers, no more surly Moroses to be found in the world : and, as if Nature her self were chang'd, and Men had laid aside these various dispositions, they are always represented under one and the

the same Character; for what reason I cannot tell, unless it be that the Women of this age, think all Men ought to be Gallants.

We are ready to acknowledge that the Wits of Madrid have a more fruitful invention than ours; and this has made us borrow from them most of our Plots, which we have fill'd with passionate and amorous Discourses, and reduc'd to more regularity and decorum. The reason is, that in Spain, where the Women are hardly ever seen, the Poet exhausts his imagination in contriving ingenious ways to bring his Lovers together; and in France, where the freedom of Conversation is allow'd, the ingenuity of the Author is employ'd in expressing the sentiments, in a tender and amorous manner.

A Spanish Lady, not long ago, was reading the Romance of *Cleopatra*, and after a tedious relation of Adventures, falling upon a nice Conversation between a Lover and his Mistress, who were alike passionate, *What a deal of Wit illemploy'd is here*, said she, *and to what end so many fine Speeches when they are got together?*

This is one of the prettiest Reflections that ever I heard made in all my life; and CALPRENEDE, tho a Frenchman, ought to have remembred, that Lovers born in a hotter climate than that of France, need but few words on such occasions. But the good judgment of that Lady would not be receiv'd in our ordinary Gallantries, where a man must speak a thousand times of a sham Passion before he can persuade his Mistress; where he must daily complain to her, before he finds an opportunity of putting an end to that affected Pain.

The *Precieuse*, or *Finical Lady* of MOLIERE, is ridiculous in her Carriage as well as Language,
for

for not shaking off the romantick humour, when her friends were treating for her so serious an affair as Marriage: but it had been no false nicety with a Gallant, to have expected his declaration, and gradual advance in the conduct of an Amour.

As for Regularity and Probability, it's no wonder they are less to be found among the Spaniards than the French: for as all the Gallantry of the Spaniards is deriv'd from the Moors, it retains still a certain tincture of Africk, that is foreign and uncouth to other Nations, and too extraordinary to be suited with the exactness of Rules. Besides, the old whim of Knight-Errantry, common to all Spain, sets the Cavaliers upon odd and freakish Adventures. The young women too from their childhood, learn the same vanity from their Books of Chivalry, and the fabulous tales of the women that are about them. Thus both sexes fill their minds with the same Notions; and most Lovers, men and women, would interpret the scrupling of an amorous extravagance to be an indifference unworthy of their Passion.

Tho Love never observes very regular measures in any Country whatsoever, nevertheless I dare be bold to say, that in France 'tis seldom extravagant, either in the way of making it, or in the ordinary effects it produces. That which is call'd a *Passionate Love* runs a great risque of being thought ridiculous: for Gentlemen there, being taken up with various business, give not way to it, as the Spaniards do in the idleness of Madrid, where nothing but Love can put them in motion.

Vol. II.

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At

* M. de St. Evremond brings in here a kind of Pun, of *Moliere*, viz. prendre le Roman par la queue. See *Les Precieuses Ridicules* of that Poet.

At Paris, we are busied by the assiduity of making our Court, the discharge of an Office, or the pursuit of an Employment ; Fortune outrivalling Mistresses, in a place where it is the custom to prefer that which one owes to himself, to what he loves. The Ladies, who are to take their measures accordingly, are also more gallant than passionate ; nay, and make use of Gallantry to insinuate into Court-Intrigues and Business. There are but few who are not govern'd by Vanity and Interest ; and the Gallants and their Mistresses vie who shall make the best use one of another for attaining their several ends.

Love however mingles with this spirit of Interest ; but it is very seldom the Master : for, the conduct that we are oblig'd to follow in our Affairs, accustoms us to some regularity in our Pleasures, or, at least, keeps us from extravagance. In Spain there is no living without Love ; but what is called *Love* in France, to speak properly, is no more than *to talk of Love, and to mix the vanity of Gallantries with dictates of Ambition.*

These differences being considered, 'tis not to be wonder'd that the Spanish Comedy, which is nothing but a representation of their Adventures, is as irregular as those can be ; and that the French Comedy, which deviates but little from the practice of our Nation, observes the same decorum in the representation of our Amours, which commonly we observe in reality. I confess, that Judgment, which ought to be of all Countries, has establish'd some Rules, which are no where to be dispens'd with : but it is a hard matter not to make some allowances to Custom, since ARISTOTLE himself, in his *Art of Poetry*, places sometimes Perfection in that which was best liked at Athens, and not in that which is really most perfect.

Comedy

Comedy cannot pretend to greater privileges than the Laws, which tho they ought all to be founded on Justice, are nevertheless different, according to the different genius of the People who made them. And if we are oblig'd to retain the air of Antiquity ; if we must preserve the Character of Heroes who have been dead two thousand years ago, when they are to be represented upon the Stage ; how is it possible not to follow the humours, and suit our selves to the manners of the living, when we represent to their eyes, what they do every day ?

Nevertheless, what authority soever Custom may challenge, without doubt Reason ought to have the prerogative ; but yet it ought not to be over-rigid : for, in things which are altogether calculated to please, as Comedy, it is uneasy to be subjected to too austere a Confinement, and to cramp and fetter those Subjects, where we aim at nothing but diversion.



OF THE
ITALIAN
 COMEDY.

SQ much for the French and Spanish Comedies : I'll now give my opinion of the Italian. I will not speak of *Amynta*, *Pastor Fido*, *Phyllis of Sciro*, and other Plays of that nature. I ought to be better acquainted than I am with the graces of the Italian Language ; and therefore I design to speak

only of Comedies that are acted upon the Stage. What we see in France upon the Italian Theatre, is not properly Comedy, since there is no true Plot in it; no coherence in the Subject; no Character strictly observ'd, nor regularity in the Composition, at least according to the rules of Art: in short, 'tis nothing but a kind of ill-form'd consort amongst several Actors, each of whom furnishes, out of his own head, what he judges proper for the part he acts. To take it rightly, it is no more than a medley of impertinent *Concetti* in the mouth of Lovers, and silly buffoonries in that of their *Zamis* *. There is no such thing as good Sense any where in it; but a kind of false Wit predominates, either in the Thoughts, which are borrow'd from the *Heavens, Sun, Stars, and Elements*, or in an affectation of Simplicity, which hath nothing of true Nature in it.

The Buffoons, I grant, are inimitable; and of an hundred that I have seen ape and mimick them, not one could ever come near them: and for Grimaces, Postures, Motions, Agility, Suppleness and distorting of their Faces, which they can vary and alter as they please; it is certain, that if one must be a great Lover of idle jesting and drollery, to be taken with what he hears, he must be also very grave and composed, not to laugh at what he sees: a man would affect too great a nicety, not to be pleas'd with their acting, because a Critick will not be satisfied with their discourse.

All representations wherein the Mind has no share in the entertainment, are tedious at long run; nevertheless they surprize, and are agreeable for some time, before they tire us. As Buffoonry diverts not a man of breeding, but by intervals, it ought to be soon over; and the Hearers should not have time

* *Harlequins, or Buffoons, in the Italian Plays.*

time enough allow'd them, to reflect upon the exactness of the discourse, and consider what is truly natural. 'Twere well if they observ'd this conduct in the Italian Comedy, where a greater mortification comes upon the neck of another; and the variety instead of relieving us, brings us only something new to tire us.

The truth is, when you are weary of the Buffoons that have too long kept the Stage, the Lovers step in next to compleat your persecution. This, in my opinion, is the worst of punishments to a delicate and nice man, who would, with more reason, prefer a speedy death before the patience of hearing them, than the Lacedemonian in B O C C A L I N I had, when he chose the gallows, before the reading of the tedious History of the *War of Pisa*, written by G U I C H A R D I N *. If any man over fond of living, is able to endure so killing a fatigue, instead of some agreeable diversity to refresh his mind, all the change he finds is the impertinence of a Doctor that plagues him infinitely more. I know, that to represent the follies of a Pedant aright, he must be made to turn all his discourse upon that sort of Learning he is master of: but that without ever answering one single Question, he should cite a thousand Authors, with a volubility that puts him out of breath; this is to bring a mad man upon the Stage, who ought to be sent to Bedlam, and not justly to represent the impertinence of a Pedantick Scholar.

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P E T R O -

* Instantissimamente supplicò, che per tutti gl'anni della sua vita lo condanneffero a remare in una Galea, che lo murassero trà due mura, e che per misericordia fino lo scorticassero vivo; perche il legger quei Discorsi senza fine, quei Consigli tanto tediosi, quelle fredissime Conscioni, fatte nella presa d'ogni vil Colombaia, era crepacuore che superava tutti gl'aculei Inglesi, &c. B O C C A L I. *Ragguagli di Parnasso*, Cent. I. Ragg. VI.

PETRONIUS goes a different way to work, when he ridicules EUMOLPUS: the Pedantry of SIDIAS is otherwise manag'd by THEOPHILE: the Character of CARITIDES in the *Facheux* or *Morose* of MOLIERE, is altogether exact; and nothing can be cut off from it, without disfiguring the whole Piece. These are the ridiculous Scholars who may be pleasantly enough represented upon the Stage: but is it not a most wretched diversion for a Gentleman to be plagued with a pitiful Pedant, whom Books have besotted; and who, as I said, ought carefully to be shut up, to conceal from us the frailty of our human Condition, and the misery of our nature?

But I must not launch out too far in my observations upon the Italian Comedy. To sum up then, in a few words, what I have sufficiently enlarg'd upon, I say, that instead of agreeable Lovers, you have nothing but affected talkers of Love; instead of natural Comedians, incomparable Buffoons, but still they are Buffoons: instead of ridiculous Pedants, wretched mad Scholars. There is hardly any part but what is forc'd, unless it be that of PANTALON, which is the least esteem'd, and yet is the only one that does not exceed the bounds of probability.

Tragedy was the chief delight of the ancient Commonwealth; and the old Romans, endow'd only with a rough Virtue, introduced no other Examples in their Theatres, but such as might fortify their natural disposition, and entertain their habitual fierceness and austerity. When politeness of Conversation was joyned to their greatness of Soul, then they began to take delight in Comedy, and sometimes they were pleas'd with noble ideas, and sometimes diverted with agreeable ones.

As soon as Rome grew corrupted, the Romans forsook Tragedy, and could not endure to see upon

on the Stage any severe representation of the ancient Virtue. From that time, to the ruin of the Republick, Comedy was the recreation of the great Men, the diversion of the Polite, and the amusemēt of a People either grown loose or civiliz'd.

A little before the Civil Wars, the Romans were again animated with the spirit of Tragedy: their genius secretly disposing and preparing them for the fatal revolutions that happen'd afterward. CÆSAR wrote one, and many persons of quality did the like. The troubles ceasing under AUGUSTUS, and peace being restor'd and settled, all sorts of Pleasures were cultivated. Comedies came again into vogue; the Pantomimi were in credit; and Tragedy still preserv'd a great reputation. Under the reign of NERO, SENECA was taken up with dire speculations, which set him upon writing those Tragedies that are still extant. When Corruption was at the height, and Vice universal, the Pantomimi wholly ruin'd both Tragedy and Comedy: Wit had no more share in Plays; and all they aim'd at, was to divert the Spectators with such postures and motions, as would give them voluptuous ideas.

The modern Italians think it enough for them to be warm'd by the same sun, to breathe the same air, and to inhabit the same country with the ancient Romans: but they leave to their Historians to talk of that severe Virtue which the Romans practis'd; and therefore think they have no need of Tragedy, to animate them to hard and difficult Things, which they have no mind to undertake. As they affect the softness of an ordinary, and the delights of a voluptuous life, so they love Plays that have relation to both. This has introduced that mixture of Comedy, and diversion of Mimicks, which we see upon all the Stages of Italy. And this is almost

all that can be said of the Italians, who, as yet, have appear'd in France.

All the present Actors of their Company are generally good Comedians, even those that act Lovers; and to do them neither injustice nor favour, I must own, that they are excellent Players, who have very bad Plays. Perhaps they can make no good ones; perhaps they have reason not to have any; for as the Earl of BRISTOL³ was, one day, objecting to CINTHIO, that there was not probability enough in their Pieces; he answer'd, *That if there was more, good Comedians with good Comedies might go starve.*



OF THE
ENGLISH
COMEDY.

THERE is no Comedy more conformable to that of the Ancients, than the English, as for what relates to the Manners. It is not a meer piece of Gallantry, full of Adventures and amorous Discourses, as in Spain and France; but a representation of the ordinary way of living, according to the various Humours and different Characters of Men. It is an *Alchymist*, who by the illusions of this Art, feeds the deceitful hopes of a vain *Curioso*: it is a *silly credulous Coxcomb*, whose foolish facility

³ George Digby, Earl of Bristol. He died in the year 1676.

cility is continually abused : it is sometimes a *ridiculous Politician*, grave and compos'd, starch'd in every thing, mysteriously suspicious, that thinks to find out hidden designs in the most common intentions, and to discover artifice in the most innocent actions of Life : it is a *whimsical Lover*, a *swaggering Bully*, a *pedantick Scholar*, the one with natural extravagancies, the other with ridiculous affectations. The truth is, these Cheats and Cullies, these Politicians, and other Characters so ingeniously devised, are carry'd on too far, in our opinion ; as those which are to be seen upon our Stage, are a little too faint to the relish of the English ; and the reason of that, perhaps, is, because the English think too much, and we, commonly, not enough.

And indeed, we are satisfied with the first images of things ; and by sticking to the bare outside, we generally take appearance for reality ; and the easy and free for what is natural. Upon this head I shall observe, by the by, that these two last qualities are sometimes most improperly confounded : the easy and the natural agree well enough in their opposition to what is stiff and forc'd ; but when we are to dive into the nature of things, or the natural humour of persons, it will be granted me, that the easy will scarce carry us far enough. There is something within us, something hidden, that would discover it self, if we sounded the subject a little more. It is as difficult for us to enter in, as for the English to get out : they become masters of the thing they think on, tho they are not so of their own thoughts. Their mind is not at rest, even when they possess their Subject ; they still dig when there is no more ore to be got, and go beyond the just and natural idea, which ought always to be maintain'd, by carrying their enquiries too far. The truth is, I never saw men of better understanding than the French,
2 who

who apply themselves to consider things with due attention ; and the English, that can shake off their too deep meditations, to return to that faculty of Discourse, and freedom of Wit, which, if possible, ought always to be had. The finest Gentlemen in the world, are the French that think, and the English that speak.

I should insensibly run into too general considerations ; and therefore must reassume my subject of Comedy, and observe a considerable difference which is to be found betwixt theirs and ours. It consists in this, that being zealous to copy the regularity of the Ancients, we still drive to the principal Action, without any other variety than that of the means that bring us to it. It is not to be denied but that the representation of one principal Event ought to be the sole scope and end proposed in Tragedy ; for we cannot without some violence and pain find ourselves taken off from what employed our first thoughts. The misfortune of an unhappy King, the sad and tragical death of a great Hero, wholly confine the mind to these objects ; and all the variety it cares for, is to know the different means that contributed to bring about this principal action ; but Comedy being contriv'd to divert and not to busie us, provided probability be observ'd, and extravagance avoided, variety in the opinion of the English, is an agreeable surprize and change that pleases ; whereas the continual expectation of one and the same thing, wherein there seems to be no great matter of importance, must of necessity make our attention flag.

Thus, instead of representing a single Cheat carry'd on by means all relating to the same end, they represent several Cheats, each of which produces its proper effect. As they scarce ever stick to the Unity of Action, that they may represent a principal person, who diverts them by different actions : so they
often

often quit that principal person, to shew various things that happen to several persons in publick places. BEN JOHNSON takes this course in his *Bartholomew-Fair*: we find the same thing in *Epsom-Wells*¹; and in both these Comedies, the ridiculous Adventures of those publick places are comically represented.

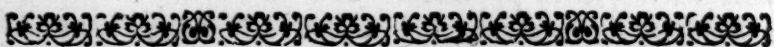
There are some other Plays which have in a manner two Plots, that are interwoven so ingeniously the one into the other, that the mind of the Spectators (which might be offended by too sensible a change) finds nothing but satisfaction in the agreeable variety they produce. It is to be confessed that regularity is wanting here; but the English are of opinion, that the Liberties which are taken in order to please the better, ought to be preferr'd before exact Rules, which dull Authors improve to an art of tiring their Audience.

Rules are to be observ'd for avoiding Confusion; good Sense is to be follow'd for moderating the flight of a luxuriant Fancy: but Rules must not so constrain the mind, as to fetter it; and a scrupulous Reason ought to be banish'd, which adhering too strictly to exactness, leaves nothing free and natural. They who cannot attain a Genius, which Nature hath denied them, ascribe all to Art, which they may acquire; and to set a value upon the only merit they have, which is that of being regular, they employ all their interest to damn any Piece that is not altogether so. As for those that love the Ridicule; that are pleased to see the follies of Mankind; that are affected with true Characters; they will find some of the English Comedies as much, or perhaps, more to their relish, than any they have ever seen.

Our

¹ One of Shadwell's Plays.

Our MOLIERE, whom the Ancients have inspired with the true spirit of Comedy, equals their BEN JOHNSON in representing truly the various humours and different ways of Men, both observing in their Characters a just regard to the peculiar taste and genius of their own nation: I believe they have both carried that point as far as the Ancients ever did; but it is not to be denied, but that they had a greater regard to their Characters than to the Plot, which might have been better laid together, and more naturally unravell'd.



U P O N
O P E R A ' S.
T O
T H E D U K E O F
B U C K I N G H A M '.

I HAVE long had a desire to tell your Grace my thoughts of Operas, and to acquaint you with the difference I have observ'd betwixt the Italian and French way of singing. The occasion I had of speaking of it, at the Duchess of MAZARINE's, has rather increased than satisfied that desire; therefore I will gratify it in the Discourse I now send to your Grace.

I

¹ George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who died in 1687.

I shall begin with great freedom, and tell your Grace, that I am no great admirer of Comedies in musick, such as now-a-days are in request. I confess I am not displeased with their magnificence; the Machines have something that is surprizing; the Musick, in some places, is charming; the whole together seems wonderful: but it must be granted me also, that this wonderful is very tedious; for where the Mind has so little to do, there the Senses must of necessity languish. After the first pleasure that surprize gives us, the eyes are taken up, and at length grow weary of being continually fix'd upon the same object. In the beginning of the Conforts, we observe the justness of the Concords; and amidst all the Varieties that unite to make the sweetness of the harmony, nothing escapes us. But 'tis not long before the Instruments stun us; and the Musick is nothing else to our ears but a confused sound that suffers nothing to be distinguish'd. Now how is it possible to avoid being tir'd with the *Recitativo*, which has neither the charm of singing, nor the agreeable energy of speech? The Soul fatigued by a long attention, wherein it finds nothing to affect it, seeks some relief within it self; and the Mind, which in vain expected to be entertained with the show, either gives way to idle musing, or is dissatisfied that it has nothing to employ it. In a word, the fatigue is so universal, that every one wishes himself out of the house; and the only comfort that is left to the poor spectators, is the hopes that the Shew will soon be over.

The reason why, commonly, I soon grow weary at Opera's, is, that I never yet saw any which appear'd not to me despicable, both as to the Contrivance of the subject, and the Poetry. Now it is in vain to charm the Ears, or gratify the Eyes, if the Mind be not satisfied; for my Soul being in better intelligence with my mind than with my senses,

ses, struggles against the impressions which it may receive, or at least does not give an agreeable consent to them, without which, even the most delightful Objects can never afford me any great pleasure. An extravagance set off with Musick, Dances, Machines, and fine Scenes, is a pompous piece of folly, but 'tis still a folly. Tho the embroidery is rich, yet the ground it is wrought upon is such wretched stuff that it offends the sight.

There is another thing in Opera's so contrary to Nature, that I cannot be reconciled to it; and that is the singing of the whole Piece, from beginning to end, as if the Persons represented were ridiculously match'd, and had agreed to treat in musick both the most common, and most important affairs of Life. Is it to be imagin'd that a master calls his servant, or sends him on an errand, singing; that one friend imparts a secret to another, singing; that men deliberate in council, singing; that orders in time of battle are given, singing; and that men are melodiously killed with swords and darts? This is the downright way to lose the life of Representation, which without doubt is preferable to that of Harmony: for, Harmony ought to be no more than a bare attendant, and the great masters of the Stage have introduc'd it as pleasing, not as necessary, after they have perform'd all that relates to the Subject and Discourse. Nevertheless, our thoughts run more upon the Musician than the Hero in the Opera: LUIGI, CAVALLLO, and CESTI, are still present to our imagination. The mind not being able to conceive a Hero that sings, thinks of the Composer that set the song; and I don't question but that in the Opera's at the Palace-Royal, LULLI is an hundred times more thought of than THESEUS or CADMUS.

I pretend not, however, to banish all manner of singing from the Stage: there are some things which ought to be sung, and others that may be sung without trespassing against reason or decency: Vows, Prayers, Praises, Sacrifices, and generally all that relates to the service of the Gods, have been sung in all Nations, and in all times; tender and mournful Passions express themselves naturally in a sort of querulous tone; the expressions of Love in its birth; the irresolution of a soul toss'd by different motions, are proper matters for Stanzas, as Stanzas are for Musick. Every one knows that the Chorus was introduc'd upon the Grecian Theatre, and it is not to be denied, but that with equal reason it might be brought upon ours. So far, in my opinion, Musick may be allow'd: all that belongs to Conversation, all that relates to Intrigues and Affairs, all that belongs to Council and Action, is proper for Actors to rehearse, but ridiculous in the mouth of Musicians to sing. The Grecians made admirable Tragedies where they had some singing; the Italians and the French make bad ones, where they sing all.

Would you know what an Opera is? I'll tell you, that it is an *odd medley of Poetry and Musick, wherein the Poet and Musician, equally confined one by the other, take a world of pains to compose a wretched performance.* Not but that you may find agreeable Words and very fine Airs in our Opera's; but you will more certainly find, at length, a dislike of the Verses, where the genius of the Poet is so cramped; and be cloy'd with the singing, where the Musician is spent by too long a service.

If I thought my self capable of giving counsel to Persons of Quality, who delight in the Theatre, I would advise them to take up their old relish for good Comedies, where Dances and Musick might be introduced. That would not, in the least, hurt the

the Representation. The *Prologue* might be sung with an agreeable Accompaniment. In the *Intermedes* ² singing might animate words, that should be as the life of what had been represented. After the end of the Play the *Epilogue* might be sung, or some Reflections upon the finest things in the Play ; which would fortify the idea, and rivet the impressions they had made upon the Spectators. Thus you might find enough to satisfy both the Senses and the Mind ; wanting neither the charms of singing in a bare Representation, nor the beauty of acting in a long continued course of Musick.

It remains that I give you my advice in general for all Comedies, where any singing is used ; and that is, to leave to the Poet's discretion the whole management of the Piece. The Musick must be made for the words, rather than the Words for the musick. The Musician is to follow the Poet's directions ; only, in my opinion, LULLI is to be exempted, who knows the Passions better, and enters farther into the heart of man, than the Authors themselves. CAMBERT ³, without doubt, hath an excellent genius, proper for an hundred different sorts of Musick, and all well managed with a just symphony of Voices and Instruments : no *Recitativo* is better understood, nor better diversified than his ; but as to the nature of the Passions, and the quality of the Sentiments that are to be expressed, he ought to receive from the Authors those lights which LULLI can give them ; and submit to be directed, when LULLI, thro' the strength of his Genius, may justly be allowed to be the director.

Before

² *An entertainment of Musick and Dancing between the Acts, which has no connexion with the Play.*

³ *See an account of him in M. de St. Evremond's Life, under the year 1678.*

Before I put an end to my Discourse, I will tell your Grace what a small esteem the Italians have for our Opera's, and how great a dislike those of Italy give us. The Italians, who apply themselves wholly to the Representation, and take a particular care in expressing things, cannot endure that we should give the name of Opera to a mixture of Dances and Musick, which have not a natural relation, or exact connexion with the Subject. The French, on the other hand, accusom'd to the beauty of their Entries, the delightfulness of their Airs, and charms of their Symphony, cannot endure the ignorance, or ill use of the Instruments in the Opera's of Venice, and are weary of a long Recitativo, which becomes tedious for want of variety. I cannot properly tell you what this Recitativo of theirs is; but I know very well that it is neither singing nor reciting; it is somewhat unknown to the Antients, which may be defined, *an aukward use of Musick and Speech*. I confess, I have found things inimitable in the Opera of LUGI, both for the expression of the Thoughts, and the charms of the Musick; but the common Recitativo was very tiresom, insomuch that the Italians themselves impatiently expected those fine places, which in their opinion came too seldom. I shall in a few words sum up the greatest defects of our Opera's: one thinks he is going to a Representation, where nothing will be represented; and expects to see a Comedy, but finds nothing of the spirit of Comedy.

So much I thought I might say concerning the different constitution of Opera's. As for the manner of singing, which we in France call *Execution* ⁴, I think, without partiality, that no Nation can justly vie with us. The Spaniards have admirable pipes; but with their warblings and shakings, they seem

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M

to

⁴ *In English, Performance.*

to mind nothing in their singing, but to out-rival the Nightingales. The Italian singing is either feign'd, or at least forc'd: for want of knowing exactly the nature or degree of the Passions, they burst out into laughter, rather than sing, when they would express any Joy; if they sigh, you shall hear violent sobs form'd in the throat, and not Sighs which unawares escape from the passion of an amorous heart; instead of a doleful tone, they fall into the loudest Exclamations; the Tears of absence, are with them the downright weeping at a funeral; sadness becomes so sorrowful in their mouths, that they roar rather than complain; and sometimes they express a languishing passion, as a natural fainting. Perhaps there may be at present some alteration in their way of singing; and by conversing with us, they may be improved as to the justness of a neat Execution, as we are improved by them, as to the beauties of a stronger and bolder Composition.

I have seen Plays in England, wherein there is a great deal of musick; but to speak my thoughts with discretion, I could not accustom my self to the English singing. I came too late to find a relish in that which is so different from all others. There is no Nation that affords greater Courage in the men, more Beauty in the women, nor more Wit in both sexes. 'Tis impossible to have every thing; and where so many good qualities are so common, 'tis no misfortune that a good Taste is a rarity there. 'Tis certain that 'tis very rarely to be found: but those persons that have it, possess it in as eminent a degree of niceness and perfection, as any in the world; being distinguish'd from the rest of their Nation, either by an exquisite Art, or by a most happy Genius.

Solus

Solus Gallus cantat ; none but the Frenchman sings. I will not be so injurious to all other Nations, as to maintain what an Author has publish'd, *Hispanus flet, dolet Italus, Germanus boat, Flander ululat, & solus Gallus cantat* : I shall leave these pretty distinctions with the Author, and only beg leave to back my opinion by the authority of LUIGI, who would not endure that the Italians should pretend to sing his *Airs*, after he had heard them sung by NYERT, HILAIRE, and the little VARENNE. On his return to Italy, he made all the Musicians of that Nation his Enemies, by saying openly at Rome, as he had said at Paris, that to make fine Musick, Italian *Airs* must come out of a French mouth. He made little account of our Songs, except those of BOISSET, which he admired, as well as the consort of our Violins, our Lutes, Harpsicords, and Organs : and how would he have been charmed with our Flutes, if they had been then in use ? It is most certain, that he was much disgusted with the harshness of the greatest Masters of Italy, when he had once heard the sweet touch, and agreeable manner of the French.

I should be too partial, if I insisted only upon our advantages : therefore I must own, that no people have a slower apprehension both for the true sense of Words, and for humouring the thought of the Composer, than the French. There are but few who less understand the quantity, and who with greater difficulty find out the pronunciation ; but when, by long study, they have surmounted all these difficulties, and are Masters of what they sing, nothing comes near them. The same thing happens to us in our instrumental Musick, and particularly in Consorts, where we can pretend to nothing very sure or just, till after an infinite number of Rehearsals ; but when once we are perfect in

them, nothing can be so just and fine. The Italians, for all their profound skill in Musick, bring their Art to our ears without any sweetness. The French, not satisfied to take away from the skill the first harshness that shews the labour of the Composition, find in the beauty of their Performance, as it were a charm for our Souls, and I know not what that touches; which they carry home to the very Heart.

I forgot to speak to your Grace about *Machines*, so easy it is for a man to forget that which he would have laid aside. Machines may satisfy the curiosity of ingenious Men, who love Mathematical Inventions, but they'll hardly please persons of good judgment in the Theatre: the more they surprize, the more they divert the mind from attending to the Discourse; and the more admirable they are, the less Tenderness and exquisite Sense they leave in us, to be touch'd and charm'd with the Musick. The Antients made no use of Machines, but when there was a necessity of bringing in some God; nay, the Poets themselves were generally laughed at for suffering themselves to be reduc'd to that necessity. If men love to be at expences, let them lay out their Money upon fine Scenes, the use whereof is more natural and more agreeable than that of Machines. Antiquity, which expos'd their Gods, even at the gates, and chimney-corners; Antiquity, I say, as vain and credulous as it was, exposed them, nevertheless, but very rarely upon the Stage. Now the belief of them is gone, the Italians, in their Opera's, have brought the Pagan Gods again into the world; and have not scrupled to amuse men with these ridiculous vanities, only to make their Pieces look great, by the introduction of that dazzling and surprizing Wonderful. These Stage Deities have long enough abused Italy: but the People there being happily

undeceived

undeceived at last, are disgusted with those very Gods they were so fond of before, and have return'd to Plays; which, in truth, cannot pretend to the same exactness, but are not so fabulous, and which with a little indulgence, may pass well enough with men of sense.

It hath happen'd with us as to our Gods and Machines, what happens with the Germans as to our Modes and Fashions: we now take up what the Italians have laid aside; and as if we would atone for the fault of being prevented in the invention, we run extravagantly into a Custom which they brought up preposterously. In truth, we cover the Earth with Deities, and make them dance in troops, whereas, they made them descend with discretion, and on the most important occasions. As *ARIOSTO* carried too far the Wonderful of Poetry, by a vain profusion of Fables, so we strain even Fable it self by a confused assembly of Gods, Shepherds, Heroes, Enchanters, Apparitions, Furies, and Devils. I admire *LULLI*, as well for the diversion of Dances, as for what concerns the Voices and Instruments; but the constitution of our Opera's must appear very extravagant to those who are true Judges of the Probable and the Wonderful.

Nevertheless, one runs a risque of having his Judgment call'd in question, if he dares declare his good taste; and I advise others, when they hear any discourse of Opera's, to keep their knowledge a secret to themselves. For my own part, who am past the age and time of signalizing my self in the world by the invention of Modes, and the merit of new Fancies, I am resolv'd to strike in with good Sense, and to follow Reason tho in disgrace, with as much zeal, as if it were still in as great vogue as formerly. That which vexes me most at this our fondness for Opera's, is, that they

that they tend directly to ruin the finest thing we have, I mean TRAGEDY, than which nothing is more proper to elevate the Soul, or more capable to form the Mind.

After this long Discourse, let us conclude, that the constitution of our Opera's cannot be more faulty than it is. But it is to be acknowledg'd at the same time, that no man can perform better than LULLI, upon an ill-conceiv'd Subject; and that it is not easy to out-do QUINAULT in what belongs to his part.



A
DISSERTATION
UPON THE WORD
VAST.
TO

The Gentlemen of the
FRENCH ACADEMY.

AFTER I had condemn'd my self as to the word *Vast*, I was in hopes the world would have been satisfied with my Recantation: but since the Gentlemen of the Academy have thought fit to add their Censure to mine, I declare my Retraction was not sincere, but the mere effect of Com-

Complaisance ; and a voluntary submission of my thoughts to those of Madam MAZARIN. Therefore I resume against them, that Reason which I quitted for her sake, and which every well-bred man would take a pride to lose to her.

We may dispute with the Gentlemen of the Academy the privilege of regulating our Language, as they please. It doth not depend upon Authors to abolish old Terms because they dislike them, and to introduce new ones according to their own fancy. All the favour we can do them, is, to make them Masters of Use, when Use does not contradict true Reason. Some Authors have refin'd Languages ; on the other hand, others have corrupted them : so that a Man must have recourse to good sense to decide the matter. Never had Rome such a set of noble Genius's, as at the latter end of the Republick : the reason is, because there was then Liberty enough remaining amongst the Romans, to give a due force to their minds ; and Luxury enough to give them Politeness and Agreeableness. At this time, when the beauty of their Language was arriv'd to its highest pitch ; when there was at Rome such admirable men, as CESAR, SALLUST, CICERO, HORTENSIVS, BRUTUS, ASINIUS POLLIO, CURIO, CATULLUS, ATTICUS, and many others, whom I need not here cite, it was just to submit to their opinions, and to receive their decisions with docility. But when the Language came to be corrupted under the Emperors ; when LUCAN came to be preferr'd to VIRGIL, and SENECA to CICERO, was any one oblig'd to submit implicitly to the authority of these Gentlemen, who then set up for Wits ? Is not PETRONIVS highly commended by all judicious persons, for ridiculing the Eloquence of his time, for knowing the false Judgment of his age, and giving to CICERO, VIRGIL, and HORACE,

the praises which they deserved? *Homerus testis
& Lyrici, Romanusque Virgilius, & Horatii curiosa
fœlicitas.*

Let us proceed from Latin Authors to the French. When NERVEZE'S¹ false Eloquence was admired, would not the Court have been obliged to any Man of good sense, who would have undeceiv'd them? When COEFFETEAU charm'd all the world with his Metaphors, and *Main-mast Sails of Eloquence*² were thought miraculous: when the florid Language of COHON³, which had neither force nor solidity, pleas'd all the pretended Wits, and the would-be Criticks: when the affectation of BALZAC, that destroy'd the natural beauty of Thoughts, pass'd for a majestick, noble Style; would it not have been an important service to the publick, to withstand the authority which these Gentlemen usurp'd, and prevent the ill taste that each of them differently set up in his own time?

I confess, that we have not the same right against the Gentlemen of the Academy. VAUGELAS, D'ABLANCOURT, PATRU, have brought our Language to its perfection; and I make no question, but that our present Authors will keep it up in the same condition wherein the former left it. But if one day a false notion of Politeness should make our Discourse feeble and languishing; if out of too great a fondness for writing puny Tales and Novels, we should study an affected easiness, which is nothing else but Nature ill-copied; if too great an application to Purity, should, at length, end in Driness; if, in pursuing always the
same

¹ Nerveze has publish'd a Volume of Moral Epistles, full of Bombast and Nonsense.

² An Expression of Coëffeteau.

³ A famous Preacher, afterwards Bishop of Nismes.

same method of thought, we should rob our Language of its fine turns ; and depriving it of all ornament, should make it barbarous, when we intend to render it natural : would it not be reasonable then to oppose these Corrupters, who would subvert the good and true Style, to give us another instead of it, as little proper to express noble Sentiments, as delicate Thoughts ?

But what have I to do to recal what's past, or to foresee what's to come ? I acknowledge the Jurisdiction of the Academy ; let them therefore decide, whether *Vast* be a word in use or no ? So far as this comes to, I will submit to their judgment : but to know the force and propriety of the word, to be satisfied whether 'tis an imputation, or an honour, they must give me leave to consult Reason. This small Discourse will shew, whether I have a true notion of it, or no.

I maintain'd, that this term *vast Genius* *, was taken in a good or bad sense, according to the things which were join'd to it ; that a Genius, *vast, admirable, piercing*, signified a wonderful Capacity ; and that on the other side, a *Genius vast and immoderate*, was a Genius that lost it self in rambling Thoughts ; in bright, but airy Ideas ; in designs too great, and not at all proportion'd to the means that may render them successful. This opinion, methinks, was moderate enough. I have now a mind to deny that *Vast* can ever be a commendation, and that nothing is capable of rectifying that quality. Great is a perfection in Minds : *Vast* always a defect. A just and regulated extent makes the Great ; an immoderate Greatness the *Vast*. *Vastitas* signifies an *excessive*

* M. de St. Evremond's Criticism relates to this French expression, *Esprit Vaste*, which in English implies a vast Genius, a vast Mind, a vast Soul, a vast Spirit, &c.

cessive Greatness. The *Vast* and the Dreadful, have a great affinity one with another : *Vast* things differ mightily from those which make an agreeable impression upon us. *Vasta Solitudo*, is not one of those Solitudes, that afford a delicious repose, that charm the misfortunes of the miserable ; 'tis a wild Solitude, where we are frighted with being alone ; where we regret the loss of Company ; where the remembrance of lost Pleasures afflicts us, and the sense of present Misfortunes torments us. A *vast House* offers something ghastly to the sight : *Vast Apartments* never made any person desirous of living in them : *Vast Gardens* cannot have either the agreeableness which is owing to Art, or those graces which Nature produces : *Vast Forests* put us into a fright ; the sight loses it self in looking over *vast Plains*. Rivers of a reasonable Greatness give us the prospect of fine Banks, and insensibly charm us with the pleasantness of their gentle Streams. Rivers too large, Over-flowings, and Inundations, displease us by the noise and violence of their Billows, and our eyes cannot with any pleasure behold their *Vast Extent*. Savage Countries that are uncultivated ; Countries ruin'd by the desolation of War ; Lands forsaken and abandon'd, have something of *Vastness*, which produces, as it were, a secret horror within us. *Vastus, quasi vastatus* : *Vast*, signifies almost the same with *laid waste, spoil'd, and ruin'd*. Let us pass from Solitudes, Forests, Plains, and Rivers, to living Creatures and Men.

Whales and Elephants are call'd *Vastæ & immanes belluæ*. That which the Poets have feign'd most monstrous, as the Cyclops, and the Giants, are nam'd *Vast* :

Vastosque

*Vastosque ab rupe Cyclopes
Prospicio* ⁵.

*Vasta se mole moventem
Pastorem Polyphemum* ⁶.

Amongst Men, those who exceeded the ordinary stature, those whom bigness or height distinguish'd from the rest, were call'd by the Latins, *Vasta Corpora*.

Vastus has obtain'd so far, as to be applied to Customs and Manners. CATO, who had otherwise so many good qualities, was a person *Vastis moribus*, according to the Romans. He had nothing of elegance in his Discourse, nothing of Grace either in his Person or his Actions: a rough savage air attended all he did. The Germans, who at present are civiliz'd and polish'd in many places, lov'd, formerly, that every thing about them should have something of *Vastness*. Their Habitation, their Attendance, their Equipage, their Assemblies, their Festivals, *Vastum aliquid redolebant*; that is to say, they were pleas'd with an immoderate Greatness, wherein there was neither Politeness nor Ornament. I have observ'd, that the word *Vastus* hath four or five different significations in CICERO, but all in an evil sense: *Vasta Solitudo* ⁷, *Vastus & agrestis* ⁸, *Vasta & immanis bellua* ⁹, *Vastam & bian-tem orationem* ¹⁰. The most usual signification of *Vastus*, is, too spacious, too extended, too great, immoderate.

It

⁵ Virg. *Aeneid. Lib. III. v. 647, 648.*

⁶ *Ibid. v. 656, 657.*

⁷ Cicer. in *Sonn. Scip. Sect. 6.*

⁸ *De Oratore Lib. I. Sect. 25.*

⁹ *De Divin. Lib. I. Sect. 24.*

¹⁰ *Rhetor. ad Herenn. Lib. IV. Sect. 12.*

It may be replied, that *Vaste* in French, does not signify what *Vastus* may signify in Latin, in the full extent of its meaning. I confess it. But why should it not keep the most natural, as well as *Liberty*, *Favour*, *Honour*, *Affliction*, *Consolation*, and a thousand words of the like nature keep theirs? Besides, there is a reason for *Vast*, which cannot be pretended for the rest; 'tis this, that we have never a French term that expresses fully and truly, what the *Vastus* of the Latins can express: and surely we did not make it French to encrease the number of Words, which signify the same thing; but to give our Language a word which it really wanted. We think with more force than we express our selves: some part of our thought always stays behind; we very seldom communicate it entirely; and 'tis by a spirit of Penetration, more than by the intelligence of Words, that we enter absolutely into the conceptions of Authors. Nevertheless, as if we were afraid to understand aright the thoughts of others, or to have our own comprehended, we weaken those very terms that would otherwise have force to express them. But in spite of our selves, *Vast* will preserve in French the true signification it has in Latin. We commonly say *too Vast*, as we say *too Insolent*, *too Extravagant*, *too Covetous*, and 'tis the excess of a vicious quality: we don't say *Vast enough*, because *enough* supposes something just and reasonable; whereas, as soon as a thing is *Vast*, there is an Excess, there is too much; *Enough* can never agree with it. Let us now examine particularly the *Vast Genius*, since that's the subject of the Question.

That which we call *Genius*, *Mind*, or *Soul*, is divided into three Faculties, the Judgment, the Memory, and the Imagination or Fancy. The Judgment may be commended for being *solid*, *profound*, *nice* in discerning, *just* in defining; but, in my opinion,

nion, no man of good sense will ever give it the quality of *Vast*. 'Tis a common expression, that such a one has a *Memory happy, faithful*, fit to receive and preserve Images : but I never heard any one call it *Vast*, except once", and that too preposterously, in my opinion. *Vast* may be applied to an *Imagination* that rambles, that loses it self, that creates visions and chimera's.

I am not ignorant, that some have pretended to praise ARISTOTLE, by attributing to him a *vast Genius*. They believ'd too, that this very epithet of *Vast*, was a great commendation to HOMER. We hear it often said, that ALEXANDER, PYRRHUS, CATALINE, CESAR, CHARLES V. and Cardinal RICHELIEU, had a *vast Genius*, a *vast Soul* : but if we take the pains to examine them well, we shall find that their great Works, and their great Actions, ought to be ascrib'd to the other qualities of their minds ; and their errors and faults imputed to the predominance of *Vast*. They had something of *Vastness*, I own it ; but still it was a vice in them, and a vice not to be pardon'd, but in consideration of their Virtues. It is an error of our Judgment to value them for what cannot be excused but by indulgence. If they had not been almost always great, we should not forgive them for being sometimes *vast*. Let us come to an examination of their Works and Actions ; let us assign to each quality the effects that really belong to it ; and begin with the Works of ARISTOTLE.

His Treatise of *Poetry* is one of the most finish'd ; but to what are owing so many judicious precepts, and so many just observations, but to the clearness of his Judgment ? No body will say, that it was to his *vast Genius*. In his *Politicks*, which may still
serve

serve to guide Legislators, he shews himself wise, prudent, and skilful in regulating the different Constitutions of States : he was by no means *vast*. No Writer ever pierced so far as he into the heart of Man, as one may see in his *Morals*, and in his *Rhetorick*, in the chapter about the *Passions*. But this he perform'd as a Philosopher, that knew how to make profound reflections, that had exactly studied his own motions, and nicely observ'd those of other men. Don't found the merit of *Vast* upon that, for it had no share therein. ARISTOTLE shew'd properly a *vast Genius* in his *Physicks*, and to that we may truly ascribe all his errors ; by that he lost himself in his Principles, in his own *Materia prima*, in the Heavens, in the Stars; and in the rest of his false Opinions.

As for HOMER, he is admirable so long as he is purely human ; just in his Characters, natural in his Passions, wonderful in knowing and expressing well what depends upon our Nature. When his *vast Genius* leads him to talk of the Gods, he speaks of them so extravagantly, that PLATO banish'd him out of his Republick as a Madman.

SENECA was in the wrong to represent ALEXANDER as a rash Adventurer, who ow'd his Grandeur to his Fortune. PLUTARCH seems, in my opinion, to have reason on his side, when he attributes the conquests of ALEXANDER to his Valour, more than to his good Fortune. In effect, consider ALEXANDER at his first accession to the Throne, and you will find, that he shew'd no less Conduct than Courage, in settling himself in the Dominions of his Father. A contempt of this Prince's youth, encourag'd his Subjects to rebel, and his Neighbours to take up arms against him ; he punish'd the seditious, and vanquish'd the restless. When this storm was over, his next step was to get himself chosen General of the Greeks against

gainst the Persians ; and these measures were so well concerted, that one could not have expected more just from the most consummate Politician. Thus being chosen, he undertook the War ; and made the Lieutenants of DARIUS, and even DARIUS himself, commit a thousand faults, without making one himself. If the greatness of his Courage had not made him pass for a rash man, by the dangers to which he exposed himself, his Conduct would have left us the idea of a wise and prudent Prince. I describe him to you great and politick, in all the fine Actions he perform'd. But you must needs have him *vast*, and 'tis that single quality that set him upon all his extravagant, preposterous undertakings. An unbounded desire of Glory engag'd him in a very foolish War against the Scythians : an immoderate Vanity persuaded him that he was the son of JUPITER. *Vast* extended as far as his Affliction, when it carried him to sacrifice entire Nations to the Manes of EPHESTION. After he had conquer'd the great Empire of DARIUS, he might have been contented with the known world ; but his *vast Mind* form'd the design of conquering another. As *vast*, he undertook his expedition into India, where his Army threaten'd to abandon him, and where his Fleet was near being lost ; from whence he return'd to Babylon, melancholy, disturb'd, uncertain, distrusting both Gods and Men. Are not these noble effects of the *vast Soul* of ALEXANDER ?

Few Princes ever had so *vast* a mind as PYRRHUS : his famous Conversation with CINEAS, which every one has heard of, is a sufficient proof of it. His Valour and experience in War gain'd him frequent Victories : his *vast Spirit*, that push'd at all things, would not give him leave to accomplish any one of them. He engag'd in enterprize upon enterprize, in war upon war, but without effect.

fect. Tho he was a Conqueror in Italy, in Sicily, in Macedonia, and wherever he came, yet his power was no where well establish'd ; his Fancy still prevailing over his Reason, threw him upon new imaginary designs, that hindred him from making any advantage, even of good success.

CATILINE is exclaim'd against as a detestable person : the same Character had been given of CÆSAR, if he had been as unfortunate in his undertaking, as the former was in his. It is certain, that CATILINE had as great Qualities as any of the Romans : a noble birth, courage, vigour of mind, strength of body ; *nobili genere natus, magna vi animi & corporis, &c.* He was SYLLA's Lieutenant, as well as POMPEY was ; of a family much more illustrious than that of the last, but of less authority with the Party. After the death of SYLLA, his chief aim was to get those employments in the Republick, which the other had the good luck to carry ; and if nothing was too great for POMPEY's Interest to obtain, nothing was high enough for the Ambition of CATILINE to pursue. What was impossible, appear'd to him but extraordinary ; and the extraordinary seem'd to him common and easy : *Vastus animus immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta cupiebat.*

By this you may see what a relation there is between a *Vast Soul*, and immoderate things. Good men condemn his crime, Politicians blame his undertaking as ill-contriv'd ; for all those that attempted to oppress the Commonwealth, except him, had the favour of the People, and the assistance of the Legions to support them. CATILINE had neither one nor t'other of these supports ; his Industry and his Courage supplied the place of every thing else in that great and difficult affair. He himself got together a body of Soldiers that had hardly any arms or subsistence ; and yet these Troops, under all these disadvantages,

disadvantages, fought with as great obstinacy as ever troops did. Every Soldier shew'd the audaciousness of CATILINE in the fight, as CATILINE shew'd the capacity of a great Captain, and the stoutness of the bravest and most resolute Soldier. Never did man die with such noble bravery and firmness. 'Tis difficult even for the best man to read this Battle, and be very much of the Republick's side against him; 'tis impossible not to forget his crime, and pity his misfortune. He might have securely gotten a great power, without infringing the Laws: this ambitious man, so *vast* in his projects, always aim'd at Power, and at length engaged in that fatal Conspiracy which proved his ruin.

Who was greater, or more dextrous than CÆSAR? What address, what industry did he not discover, in sending home that prodigious multitude of Switzers, who endeavoured to settle themselves amongst the Gauls? It requir'd as much prudence as valour to defeat and dislodge the Germans, and he equally display'd both those talents. He shew'd an admirable dexterity in managing the Gauls, improving their private jealousies to ensnare them by the help of one another. Something of *Vast*, that mingled with his noble Qualities, made him forsake his ordinary measures, to undertake the expedition of Britain. A chimerical Expedition, vain in regard of his reputation, and altogether unserviceable to his interests! What stratagems did he not make use of, to remove the obstacles that oppos'd his project of Sovereignty? he undermin'd the credit of all the good men that could support the Republick. He made CICERO be banish'd by CLODIUS, who had been familiar with his Wife. He gave so much uneasiness to CATULLUS and LUCULLUS, that they left all business. He render'd the Integrity of CATO odious, and

the Greatness of POMPEY suspected. He made the People rise against the asserters of their Liberty. Thus you see how CESAR play'd his cards against the Defenders of the State. Let us consider how he carried himself towards those that assisted him to overturn it. His inclination for factious persons discover'd it self in CATILINE's Conspiracy: he was a friend to the latter, and a secret accomplice of his crime. He courted the friendship of CLODIUS, a man violent and rash. He join'd interests with CRASSUS, who was rather rich, than a good Citizen. He made use of POMPEY's acquaintance to gain reputation: but as soon as 'twas thought high time to clip the wings of his authority, and to prevent the establishment of his power, he left no stone unturn'd to ruin POMPEY. He secured ANTHONY on his side: he gain'd over CURIO and DOLABELLA: he retain'd to his service HIRTIUS, OPPILIUS, BALBUS, and all the stirring, busy, bold, and daring; in short, all that were capable of bringing about under him the ruin of the Commonwealth. Measures so fine and artificial; methods so secret and so delicate; actions all tending to one centre; so much dissimulation, so many subtle fetches cannot be ascrib'd to a *vast Soul*: his faults, his misfortunes, his ruin, and his death, can be imputed to nothing else. It was this *vast Mind* that hindred him from enslaving Rome as he might have done, or from governing it as he ought. 'Tis this that gave him the thoughts of making war upon the Parthians, when it was more necessary for him to have made sure of the Romans. At that uncertain critical juncture, when the Romans were neither Citizens, nor Subjects; when CESAR was neither Magistrate, nor Tyrant; when he violated all the Laws of the Republick, and could not set up his own; being perplexed, unsettled, lost in *vast Ideas* of his imagin'd Grandeur;

deur ; not knowing how to rule his thoughts, nor his affairs, he offended the Senate, and yet trusted the Senators ; he abandon'd himself to faithless and ungrateful Men, who preferring Liberty before all virtues, chose rather to murder a friend and benefactor, than to have a Master. Commend, Gentlemen, commend a *vast Soul* ; it cost CÉSAR both his Empire and his Life.

BAUTRU, who judg'd well enough of the merit of men, used to prefer CHARLES the fifth to all the men that Europe ever produced since the time of the Romans. I will not pretend to determine so nice a case, but I am inclin'd to believe, that his natural parts, his courage, his activity, his vigour, his magnanimity, and his constancy, made him more considerable than any Prince of his time. When he took upon him the Government of his Dominions, he found Spain revolted against Cardinal XIMENES who was Regent there, and whose severe humour, and intractable behaviour, were insupportable to the Spaniards. CHARLES was oblig'd to go to Spain, and taking the management of the affairs out of the hands of XIMENES into his own, all the Grantees return'd immediately to their duty, and all the Cities to their obedience. CHARLES the fifth was more politick, or more fortunate than FRANCIS the first, in their competition for the Empire : FRANCIS was more rich and more powerful ; CHARLES carried it by his Fortune, or by the superiority of his Genius. The victory of Pavia, and the taking of Rome, put into his hands a King of France and a Pope : a triumph, that surpass'd all those of the antient Romans. The great League of Smalcald was defeated both by his conduct, and his valour. He chang'd the whole face of affairs in Germany ; transferr'd the Electorship of Saxony from one branch to another ; I mean from FREDERICK, who

was dispossess'd, to the House of MAURICE, who had follow'd the victorious Party. Religion it self was enslav'd to victory ; and received from the will of the Emperor the famous *Interim* ¹¹, which will never be forgotten. But this *vast Soul* embraced too many things, to regulate any one in particular : he did not consider that he could do more by others, than by himself ; and at that very time when he thought he had subdued Rome and the Empire, MAURICE turning against him the Armies which he seem'd to command for his service, was so near surprizing him in Inspruck, that he forc'd him to fly in his shirt, and to retire in all haste to Villach. It is certain, that CHARLES the fifth had great Qualities, and performed very great Actions ; but this *vast Soul*, for which he is applauded, made him commit many errors, and brought many misfortunes upon him. To that are owing his fatal Undertakings in Africk, and several other designs, as ill projected as they were ill executed ; to that are owing those voyages and travels from Nation to Nation, wherein there was more fancy than real interest. 'Tis this *vast Soul*, that made the Spaniards call him a *Knight-Errant*, and gave an occasion to those that did not love him to look upon him as a greater Traveller than Conqueror. Admire, Gentlemen, admire if you please, the virtue of the *vast Spirit* : it turns the Hero into a Knight-Errant, and gives to heroical Truths the air of fabulous Adventures.

I could shew that this same spirit was the cause of all the misfortunes of the last Duke of BURGUNDY, as well as those of CHARLES EMANUEL,

¹¹ This was a kind of Regulation which Charles V. made in 1548, concerning the Articles of Faith which he would have to be generally embrac'd in Germany, till a Council had decided the matters in controversy.

NUEL, Duke of Savoy. But I am impatient to come to Cardinal RICHELIEU, to discover in his person the different effects of the Great and the *Vast*.

One may say of Cardinal RICHELIEU, that he had a very great Genius ; and as it was Great, he brought extraordinary advantages to our Kingdom ; but as it was sometimes *Vast*, he brought us also to the brink of ruin. When he first came into the Ministry, he found that France was govern'd by the Counsels of Rome and Madrid. Our Ministers receiv'd all the impressions that Cardinal MARQUEMONT¹³ gave them ; and the Pope manag'd this Cardinal, as the Spaniards manag'd the Pope. The King, who was as jealous of the grandeur of his Kingdom, as any King could be, design'd within himself to follow the true interest of it : the artifices of those that govern'd, made him follow those of strangers ; and if Cardinal RICHELIEU had not sat at the helm, this Prince, who was naturally an enemy to Spain and Italy, had been a good Spaniard, or good Italian, in spite of his aversion. I will instance in a passage that's little known, but very true : Cardinal MARQUEMONT writ a long Letter to Cardinal RICHELIEU, concerning the business of the Valtoline ; and to be in favour with this new Minister, he carefully instructed him in all the nice measures that a man ought to observe, when he has any thing to do with the Italians and Spaniards. Cardinal RICHELIEU, for an answer, sent him four Lines, to this purpose :

The King hath chang'd his Council, and the Council their Maxims. An Army will be sent to the Valtoline, which shall make the Pope more compliant, and oblige the Spaniards to give us satisfaction.

N 3

Monsieur

¹³ Denys Simon de Marquemont, Archbishop of Lions, then Ambassador of France at Rome, and afterwards raised to the Cardinalship.

Monsieur DE MARQUEMONT was much surprized at the smartness of the Letter, and yet more to see the new spirit, that now began to inform the Ministry. As he was a man of parts, he alter'd the scheme of his conduct, and begg'd pardon of the Minister, for being so presumptuous as to give him instructions, which himself ought to have received from him ; acknowledging he was in an error to believe, that the Spaniards would be ever brought to a reasonable Treaty, by a bare Negotiation. Monsieur DE SENECTERRE often said, that this short Letter of Cardinal RICHELIEU to Cardinal MARQUEMONT, was the first that let people into the secret of this Minister's design to pull down the power of Spain, and to restore to our Nation the superiority it had lost. But before any thing of importance could be undertaken abroad, it was necessary to be secure at home ; and the Hugonot Party was so considerable in France, that it seem'd to compose another State within the State. This did not hinder RICHELIEU from reducing them. As the War had been unfortunately carried on in the Ministry of the Constable DE LUYNES, he was oblig'd to fall upon a new Scheme ; and this produc'd effects full as happy, as the other had done the quite contrary. It was agreed on all hands, that Rochelle was the soul of the party: there it was that consultations were held, and designs form'd : the interests of a hundred and a hundred Cities united there ; and 'twas from thence, that a body compos'd of so many separate Parties, receiv'd life and motion. Therefore there was nothing else to be done, but to take Rochelle, and when that fell, all the rest must fall of course. But when the strength of the place came to be consider'd ; when they thought on the vast numbers that would defend it ; and the zeal of those that would engage in its defence ; when

when they reflected how easy it was to relieve it ; when they saw the Sea free, and consequently the gates open to strangers, then they believed that to be impregnable, which had never been taken. In short, all but Cardinal RICHELIEU despair'd of any possibility to reduce it. He was in hopes, and his hopes made him form the design of this great Siege. In the deliberation, all difficulties were removed ; in the execution, all conquer'd. Men shall eternally remember that famous Dyke, that stupendous work of Art, which offer'd violence to Nature it self, and gave new bounds to the Ocean, They shall always remember the obstinacy of the Besieg'd, and the resolution of the Besiegers. To what end should we make a longer Discourse ? Rochelle was taken, and it was hardly surrender'd, when a greater Enterprize call'd us abroad.

The Dukedom of Mantua coming by succession to the Duke of NEVERS, France had a mind to settle him there ; and Spain rais'd an Army to prevent us. The Emperor, under pretence of securing his Right, but indeed with a design to serve Spain, march'd some Troops into Italy ; and the Duke of SAVOY, who had embrac'd the interests of the House of Austria, had engaged to stop us at the passage of the Mountains, to give the Spaniards and Germans leisure to execute their Designs. So many oppositions were to no purpose : the Pass of Suza was forced ; the Emperor's Army was entirely ruin'd ; SPINOLA died with grief for not taking Casal ; and the Duke of NEVERS being acknowledged Duke of MANTUA, remain'd in quiet possession of his Dominion. Whilst the Emperor's Army wasted it self in Italy, GUSTAVUS King of Sweden was engaged to enter Germany, where he won Battles, took Cities, and extended his Conquests from the Baltick-Sea to the very Rhine. He was growing too powerful for us, when he was

kill'd; and his death left the Swedes too feeble to support our Interests. Here it was that Cardinal RICHELIEU shew'd the master-piece of his Politicks. He retain'd the Troops that were desirous of marching home to Sweden: he confirm'd the good intentions of a young Queen not well fix'd in her Throne; and made himself so sure of General BANIER, that the War was maintained under a new Reign, with as much vigour, as it had been under that great King. When the Duke of WEYMAR, and Marechal DE HORN had lost the battle of Nortlinghen, Cardinal RICHELIEU redoubled his succours; sent great Armies into Germany; stopt the progress of the Imperialists, and gave the Swedes an opportunity to retrieve their affairs in the Empire.

All this was perform'd by Cardinal RICHELIEU, as he was Great, Magnanimous, Wise and Resolute. Now let us see what he did by his *vast Soul*.

The imprisoning of the Elector of Triers gave us an occasion, or at least a pretence, to declare War against the Spaniards; and this design was worthy of the great Soul of Cardinal RICHELIEU: but that *vast Spirit*, which some ascribed to him, lost itself in too many projects. He took such false measures abroad, and gave such ill orders at home, that our Affairs, in all likelihood, must have been ruin'd. The Cardinal entertain'd the most fantastical design that ever was form'd: which was, to attack Flanders behind, and to cut off its communication with Germany, by the means of the Maese. He imagin'd he might take Brussels, and reduce the Low-Countries at the same time. In order to that, he sent an Army of thirty five thousand men to join the Prince of ORANGE in Brabant. But instead of inclosing Flanders between the Maese and the Somme, he shut up our
Army

Army between the Fortresses of Flanders and those on the Maese ; infomuch, that there were neither Provisions nor Ammunition in our Camp : and without amplifying the matter, the Misery was so great among us, that after we were oblig'd to raise the Siege of Louvain, defended by some Scholars only, the Officers and Soldiers return'd into France, not in a body like Troops, but straggling, begging an alms for their Subsistence, like Pilgrims. See what the *vast Spirit* of the Cardinal produc'd by the fantastical project of joining the two Armies ! This great Genius, whose thoughts were too diffused, took yet worse measures the following Campaign. The Enemies forced the Count DE SOISSONS, who defended the passage of Bray, with an inconsiderable body. Having pass'd the Somme, they made themselves Masters of the Field, took our Cities, which they found unprovided with all things ; carried Desolation as far as Compiegne, and Terror even to Paris. A fine commendation for Cardinal RICHELIEU, that his projects were *Vast* ! The very quality, which the Gentlemen of the Academy value so highly, made him commit full as gross faults in the Campaign of Aire. He undertook a great Siege in Flanders, at the same time that the Count of SOISSONS entred Champagne with an Army. Hardly had we taken Aire, but the Mareschal DE LA MEILLERAYE was defeated, and the City besieged by the Enemy. If the Count had not been killed after he had won the battle of Sedan ¹⁴, we might have expected the greatest disorder in the world, considering what a disposition the People were then in. Had the Gentlemen of the Academy been particularly acquainted with Monsieur DE TURENNE, they would have plainly

¹⁴ Lewis de Bourbon, Count of Soissons, was kill'd at the Battle of la Marfée near Sedan, in 1642.

plainly found that the *vast Spirit* of the Cardinal was by no means approved by him. That wise General admir'd a hundred qualities of this Minister, but he could not endure the *Vast*, for which he is commended. 'Twas that caused him to affirm, *That Cardinal MAZARIN was wiser than Cardinal RICHELIEU; that the designs of Cardinal MAZARIN were just and regular; those of Cardinal RICHELIEU greater, but not so well concerted, as being the product of too extensive an Imagination.*

These, Gentlemen, are some of those Reasons I had to offer to you against the word *Vast*. If I have not submitted to the Judgment you have given in favour of Madam MAZARIN, 'tis because I found in your Writings a censure of *Vast*, of much greater force than can be found in this Discourse. And indeed you have given such just bounds to your own Wits, that you seem yourselves to condemn the Word you defend.



U P O N
F R I E N D S H I P.
T O T H E
DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

OF all the Sayings of the Antients, which you have so judiciously observ'd, and so happily retain'd, none affects me more than that of AGESILAUS, when he recommends the affair of one of his

his Friends to another. If N I C I A S, says he, *has committed no fault, set him at liberty; if he has, set him at liberty for my sake: let the matter be how it will, set him at liberty.* Behold here, Madam, the force of Friendship! A King of the Lacedemonians, so upright, so virtuous, so severe; a King, who ought to give his Subjects examples of Justice, not only allows, but even commands Injustice, in an instance wherein his Friend is concern'd.

Had a private man acted as A G E S I L A U S did, there would be no wonder in the case. Private men are but too much fetter'd by the Laws of Civil Society; so that one of the greatest pleasures they can enjoy, is sometimes to follow the dictates of Nature, and to indulge their own Inclinations. 'Tis with regret they obey those that govern; and on the contrary, love to serve those they are pleas'd with: but that a King, taken up with his greatness, should renounce the adorations of the Publick, and derogate from his own Authority and Power, to descend to himself, and feel the most natural sentiments of Humanity, 'tis what is not easy to apprehend, and which well deserves our Reflections.

'Tis certain, one ought not to look on his Prince as his Friend. The great distance between Sovereignty and Subjection, does not admit that union of Affections, which is necessary to love well; and the power of a Prince, and the duty of Subjects, have in them something opposite to the Tenderness that Friendship requires.

To exercise dominion without violence, is all that the best of Princes can do; to obey without murmuring, is all that can be required of the best of Subjects. Now Moderation and Docility have no great allurements: and those two Virtues are not lively enough to raise inclinations, and kindle the ardour of Friendship. The ordinary intercourse between Kings and their Courtiers, is generally an
intercourse

intercourse of Interest. Courtiers pursue fortune with Kings; Kings expect services from Courtiers.

However, there are times, wherein either the fatigue of business, or the being disgusted with pomp and magnificence, obliges Princes to seek in the purity of Nature, those enjoyments which they cannot find in their Grandeur. Tired out with ceremonies, affected gravity, state, and shew, they cast about for those natural Sweets, and endearments of Freedom; of which their condition deprives them. Perplexed and troubled with jealousies and suspicions, they look out, at last, for a bosom Friend, to whom they may open a heart, which they keep shut up to all the rest of the world. The flattery of fawning Adulators makes them wish for a sincere Friend; and this produces those Confidants, who are call'd *Favourites*: those persons endear'd to Princes, with whom they ease themselves of the burden of their secrets; and with whom they are pleas'd to enjoy all the sweets, which a familiar intercourse, and a free conversation may yield to intimate Friends.

But how dangerous are such Friendships to a Favourite who is more solicitous of shewing his Love, than watchful on his conduct and behaviour! This Confident thinks to find a Friend, where he meets with his Master; and, by an unexpected turn, his familiarity is punish'd, as the indiscreet freedom of a Servant who forgot himself. Those Courtiers, whose conduct is ruled by their interest, find in their own industry wherewithal to make themselves agreeable; and prudence makes them avoid whatever may be offensive or displeasing. He who truly loves his Master, only consults his own heart and affection: he thinks himself safe in what he speaks, and what he does, by what he feels within himself; and the warmth of an ill-govern'd Friend.

Friendship causes his ruin, where the caution of those who have not the same affection, would preserve to him all the advantages of his fortune. Thus men generally lose the favour of Princes, who are more careful of punishing what offends their Character, than easy to forgive what is done by an impulse of Nature. Happy those Subjects, whose Princes know how to excuse what the weakness of human condition renders excusable in Men! But let us not envy all those who make themselves dreaded: for they lose the pleasures both of loving and of being loved. Let us return to more particular considerations on Friendship.

I ever admir'd EPICURUS's Morals; and what I value most in his Morals, is, the preference he gives to Friendship, before all other Virtues. In truth, Justice is only a Virtue establish'd for the support of human Society; it is the work of Men, whereas Friendship is the work of Nature. Friendship is the only pleasure of our Lives; when Justice, with all its rigors, can hardly make us safe. If Prudence makes us avoid some evils, Friendship alleviates them all: if Prudence makes us acquire some goods, 'tis Friendship gives a relish to the enjoyment of them. Have you occasion for wholesome Counsel, who can give it you but a faithful Friend? Who can you entrust with your Secrets, to whom can you open your Heart, and unveil your Soul, unless it be a Friend? and how tiresome would it be for a man to be always close confined within himself, without a Confidant either of his affairs or pleasures? Enjoyments cease to be so, as soon as they are not communicated. *Even the heavenly Felicity would be tiresome, without the confidence of a Friend* *. I have observ'd, that devout Persons who are most disengaged from the world, and love God with the greatest affection, love in God other de-
vour

* *This is a Thought of one of the Antients.*

vout Persons, that they may have visible objects of their Friendship. One of the great Pleasures which is found in loving God, is to be allow'd to love those that love him.

I wonder'd formerly to see so many Confidants of both Sexes upon our Stage; but found, at last, that the use of them was very prudently introduc'd: for a Passion imparted to no body, proves oftener a tiresome constraint to the Mind, than an agreeable pleasure to the Senses. As an Amour cannot be made publick without shame, so it cannot be kept altogether secret without uneasiness: but with a Confident, a man is more safe in his conduct, his Uneasinesses are allay'd, his Pleasures redouble, and all his Troubles diminish. Poets, who well know the constraint which attends a conceal'd Passion, make us talk of it to the Winds, to Rivulets, and to Trees; upon a belief, that 'tis better to speak of what one feels, even with inanimate things, than to keep it too secret, and make one's own silence a second Torment.

As I have no shining merit to boast of, I hope I may be allow'd to mention one, upon which men do seldom value themselves; which is, the having gain'd the entire Confidence of my Friends; and the most secret person that ever I knew, was only reserv'd with others, that he might be the more open with me. He conceal'd nothing from me, as long as we convers'd together; and he would, perhaps, have been glad of an opportunity to tell me every thing, when we were asunder. The remembrance of such an endearing Confidence is very sweet to me; but the thoughts of the condition he is in, is still more grievous. I have contracted a familiarity with my own Misfortunes, but never shall with his; and since I can bestow nothing but sorrow on his Disgrace, no day shall pass, but I shall grieve and lament it.

Such

Such entire Confidences, admit of no manner of dissimulation. *We use a great deal better an Enemy whom we openly profess to hate, than a Friend from whom we conceal any thing, or with whom we dissemble*²: for, an enemy may, indeed, receive more hurt by our hatred, but a friend will suffer a greater injury by our dissimulation. The latter is a vice which is not tolerated in civil Society: therefore, with more reason, ought it not to be suffer'd in private Friendships.

But to preserve so precious a thing as Friendship, it is not enough to be upon one's guard against Vices, but one must be so even against Virtues, nay, against Justice it self. The severities of Justice do not consist with the tenderesses of Friendship; whosoever pretends to be just, is either conscious he is already an ill friend, or inclin'd to be so. The Gospel seldom recommends Justice, without recommending Charity at the same time; with design, in my opinion, to soften a Virtue which would be austere, and almost savage, but for the mixture of a little Love. Justice, blended with other virtues, is excellent; but all alone, without any mixture of good-nature, mildness, and humanity, it is more wild than the men it first brought together; and it may be said, that it banishes all manner of sweetness and agreeableness from the civil Society it has settled.

Friendship is not only apprehensive of the rigour of Justice, but likewise of the profound reflections of Wisdom, that keep us too much within our selves, when Inclination would carry us towards another. Friendship requires a fire that animates, and does not like circumspections that stop it: it ought always to be absolute mistress of the fortunes, and sometimes of the lives of those it unites.

In

² *This is a Thought of one of the Ancients.*

In this union of wills, different Opinions may, however, be allow'd : but disputing, in such a case, ought to be a conference in order to clear doubts, and not an exasperating contention. A man ought not to stir up passion, where he only seeks for lights ; and therefore Friends ought to avoid very clashing Opinions in Religion. A man who subjects all to Reason, and one who depends wholly upon Authority, will hardly agree together. HOBBS and SPINOSA, who admit neither Prophecies nor Miracles, but upon a long and judicious examination, will have no great value for those credulous people, who receive the *Revelations* of St. BRIDGET, and the *Legend of the Saints*, as Articles of Faith. I remember I have seen an estrangement among Devout persons, because some of them entertain'd too great apprehensions from God's Justice, and others too large hopes from his Goodness.

I should never have done, if I would explain whatever conduces either to establish, or to destroy the confidence of such Friendships. They cannot subsist without faithfulness and secrecy ; for 'tis what makes them secure : but this is not sufficient to render them agreeable and endearing. There must be, besides safety, a certain union between two Souls, which is form'd by a secret charm, I cannot express, and which is more easily felt than perfectly known. A familiar intercourse with a beautiful, ingenious, and judicious Woman, would, in my opinion, make such a union yet more agreeable, if one could depend on its duration. But when any thing of Passion mixes with it, disgust terminates confidence with Love ; and if there be nothing but bare friendship, the sentiments of friendship cannot hold it long against the motions of a Passion.

I have wonder'd a hundred times why the Fair Sex had been excluded from the management of publick Affairs ; for I found some of them more
skilful

skilful and abler than men. I was, at length, sensible that this exclusion did not proceed either from the malice of envy, or any suggestion of private interest; nor yet from an ill opinion of their wit; but merely (I hope I may speak it, as I mean it, without offence) because one could not rely on their weak and unsteady affection, their heart being too much sway'd by their natural frailty. *A Woman who may wisely govern a Kingdom one day, will give herself a master the next, as one would not entrust with the looking after a dozen of Hens, to use Cardinal MAZARIN'S own words.* What would not Madam DE CHEVREUSE, the Countess of CARLISLE, and the Princess PALATINE, have brought about, had not they spoil'd by their affections, all they might have perform'd by their Wit? The errors of the Heart, are far more dangerous than the extravagancies of the Imagination: these may, every one of them, be corrected by the Judgment; whereas our Affection inclines us to evil, and makes us adhere to it, in spite of all the lights of our understanding:

*Video meliora, proboque,
Deteriora sequor.*

A very ingenious Woman ⁴ told me one day, that *she return'd God thanks, every night, for her Wit, and pray'd him, every morning, to preserve her from the follies of her Heart.* Oh LOT, Oh LOT, how little you are in danger from these follies! be thankful to God for your bright parts, and rely

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O

on

³ See the Life of M. de St. Evremond, under the year 1676.

⁴ Madam de l'Enclos.

⁵ Charlotte de Nassau, daughter of Lewis de Nassau Lord of Beverweert, Ambassador extraordinary from the States General at the Court of England. She was sister to the Countesses of Arlington and Ossory, and to Messieurs d'Odyck, Auwerkerk, &c.

on your self for your Inclinations. I know some persons, L O T, who have no great reason to thank God for your Wit. The little *Bouffette*, among the rest, would willingly consent that your Heart were somewhat disorder'd, and your Judgment less free and independent.

Superior Genius, how pleas'd are your Vassals to admire in you so much Reason, and so much Beauty! what satisfaction it is to them to see you despise the tedious discourses of Beauties; the fulsome Conversations about Commodities, new-fashion'd Sleeves, and Indian Stuffs? How sweet it is to see you abandon the false Gallantry of others, *Baskets full of Ribbons*, and the genteel Cane of Monsieur D E N E M O U R S ⁶! Soul elevated above all other Souls, what pleasure it is to see you make such a noble use of what you have; so little regret what you had, and so little desire what you have not!

Add, Madam, the merit of the Heart, to that of the Soul and Mind: defend that heart of yours against *officious Fops* ⁷; those busy fellows, who are ever ready to shut a door or a window, to take up a glove or a fan.

Love does not injure the reputation of Ladies; but the slender merit of their Lovers disgraces them. You'd do me wrong, Madam, if you thought me an enemy to Tenderness: for as old as I am, I should be sorry to be free from it. We love as long as we can draw breath. What I desire in Friendship is, that Knowledge should go before Affection; and that an esteem justly form'd in the Mind, should animate it self in the Heart,

⁶ See la Princesse de Cleves; a Romance written by the Duke de la Rochefoucault, Madam de la Fayette, and M. de Segrain.

⁷ Our Author calls them in French, *Rendeurs de petits soins*, an expression taken out of la Carte de Tendre, in the first Tome of the Romance of Clelia.

Heart, and receive there such warmth as is necessary for Friendship, as well as Love. Love therefore, Madam; but love no objects but what are worthy of you. I contradict my self here unawares, and forbid whatever I will allow. To give you such a piece of advice, is to be more severe than Preachers in a pulpit, and less indulgent than Father Confessors.

If my wishes were accomplish'd, you should be ambitious, and govern those that govern others^s. Either become mistress of the World, or remain mistress of your self; not in order to pass tedious days in that sad and melancholy Indolence, which some would trump up for Virtue; but to have an absolute power over your affections, and over-rule your pleasures.

Sometimes let Reason, with a sov'reign sway,

Controul all your desires:

Sometimes let Reason to your heart give way,

And fan your warmest fires.

If Confidence be one of the greatest comforts of life, enjoy the sweetness of it both with your dear LOT; and with him whom you may be sure you can trust, as well as your self.

* See the Life of M. de St. Evremond, under the year 1676.





A
L E T T E R
T O T H E
E A R L O F S T. A L B A N S.

NO company is so agreeable and good, but one time or other it must part : therefore, by a much stronger reason, a melancholy society ought not to last for ever. As for ours, my Lord, 'tis the most doleful that ever was known. Since I have begun to play at Madam MAZARIN's, I have not had Spadillo six times; Basto has come oftner to me, but 'tis a decoy that tempts me to play, and causes me to be beasted. I draw none but Trays of Clubs or Spades, or Sixes of Hearts and Diamonds. However, my Lord, I return heaven thanks, when nothing but lamentations or murmurs might be expected from me. God be praised, I set a good example, and such a one as your partner ought to set : however, it will, at long run, ruin my Affairs, and not mend yours ; which made me say last night, like M. DE BELLE-GARDE, *I pay and play no more, and do what I please*².

Let

¹ Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans, Lord Chamberlain to Queen Henrietta, Consort of King Charles I. He dyed in 1684.

² M. de Bellegarde, maternal Uncle of Madam de Montespan, who was somewhat passionate and whimsical, used to say, when
he

Let us comfort our selves, my Lord, that we are in a better condition than those that win our money ; for 'tis better by much to suffer an injury, than to do it. Madam MAZARIN has an excellent hand at filching my *Fishes*, and dropping a Card out of the stock, when I play without taking in, with four Matadors in hand. I address my self to the Prince DE MONACO³, who tells me very seriously, and with an air of sincerity : *Upon my word, Monsieur DE ST. EVREMOND, I look'd another way.* Your friend the Marquis DE SAISSAC laughs much, and decides nothing ; and Monsieur COURTIN declares that my hardships are great. But all the declarations of Monsieur COURTIN signify little or nothing. The Ambassador is as little regarded in this house, as he would be at the Exchange, if he went about to justify Sir ELLIS LAYTON⁴ there. In this extremity I call heaven to witness, but heaven has no more credit than the Ambassador.

Come to town, my Lord, to maintain your own rights your self ; the Country was never made for such as you. Let those be disgusted with the world, with whom the world is already disgusted. But let those persons of worth and honour, who are beloved by it, still continue in it. A man of honour and politeness ought to live and die in a capital City ; and, in my opinion, there are but three capital Cities in Europe, Rome, London, and Paris. But Paris is no longer a place for your Lordship to live in ; of the many friends you had there, some are

Q 3

dead,

he was in ill luck, I pay and play no more ; I do what I please ; which saying became proverbial among the other Gamblers his cotemporaries.

³ The Prince of Monaco came over to England, in the year 1676.

⁴ He was one of the Commissioners of Prizes, whom the Merchants charg'd with great misdemeanors.

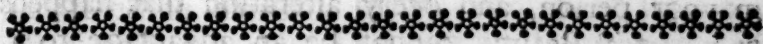
dead, and the others are imprison'd : Rome cannot suit with you ; nor can the Disciple of St. PAUL like a place, where St. PETER's successor is the sovereign : this goodly and great City, called London, daily expects you ; and here, my Lord, you ought to fix your abode. Free conversations at table, with a few guests ; a game at Hombre at her Royal Highness's⁵, and Chefs at home, will make you as easily wait the last period of life at London, as Monsieur DES YVETEAUX did at Paris. He died at eighty years of age, causing a Saraband to be play'd to him, a little before he expir'd, *that his Soul*, as he express'd himself, *might slide away the easier*⁶. You'll not pitch upon Musick to soften the hardships of that voyage. A Vole at Hombre, and three aces eldest hand against three nines at Crimpo, will determine your days with as great satisfaction. This will not happen the Lord knows when, if you come and live at London : but I'll not give you six months life, if you stay in the Country with those melancholy thoughts you have taken up there.

A

⁵ *The Dutcheſs of York.*

⁶ *See the Melanges d'Histoire & de Litterature de Vigneul Marville, Tom. I. p. 154. & ſeqq.*





A

L E T T E R

T O T H E

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

I Have resolv'd, Madam, to give you a piece of Advice, tho I am not unsensible how little the Ladies care to receive any. But let the effect be what it will, I am too much concern'd for your Beauty, not to inform you, that you'll injure it extremely, if you should put on fine clothes on the Queen's birth-day. Let others of your sex make use of Ornaments: these are artificial Beauties that serve them instead of the natural; and we are oblig'd to 'em for gratifying our eyes with something more agreeable than their own persons. But should you follow their example, we should not have the same obligation to your Grace. Every ornament that is bestow'd upon you, hides a charm; as every ornament that is taken from you, restores you some new grace, and you are never so lovely, as when we behold nothing in you but your self.

The greatest part of the Ladies are very advantageously lost under their dress. Some women look well enough with a pearl-necklace, that would make a very sorry figure with their bare necks. The richest necklace in the world, would have an

ill effect upon you, it would make some alteration in your person, and every alteration that happens to a perfect Beauty, cannot be an advantage to it. Those who keep your Jewels from you, are better friends to your beauty than you may imagine. I am more your humble servant than any man ; but as much your humble servant as I am, there are some days, when I can find excuses for Messieurs COLBERT and DU METZ¹. Were you in the condition you ought to be in, it would not be so easy to distinguish the advantages of your personal merit, from those of your fortune. Those Gentlemen save us that trouble : thanks to the care they have taken to separate those two things ; we plainly see you are oblig'd to none but your self for all the tender sentiments men have for you. Let others lay out all they are worth in Jewels and fine Clothes ; Nature has been at all the expence : and as you would be ungrateful, so we should betray an ill taste, should we not be equally content with that profusion of gifts she has heap'd upon you.

I would counsel you, Madam, to take the same measures on her Majesty's Birth-day, which the famous BUSSI D'AMBOISE formerly observed at a Tournament. Being inform'd before-hand that all the Noblemen of the Court design'd to put themselves to an extraordinary expence in their Equipage and Clothes, he order'd his Retinue to be dress'd like Lords, and appear'd himself in the plainest dress in the world, at the head of so rich a train. The advantages of Nature were so conspicuous in the person of BUSSI, that he alone was taken for a great Lord, and the other Noblemen, who rely'd so much upon the magnificence of their habits,

¹ M. Colbert, and M. du Metz, Keeper of the Royal Treasury, had in their custody the Dutcheſs of Mazarin's Jewels.

habits, pass'd but for Valets. Govern your self, I beseech you, Madam, by the example of BUSSI: let FANCHON and GRENIER², be attir'd like Dutcheffes; but as for your self, appear in the ordinary dress of a country Nymph, with nothing but the charms of your Beauty to recommend you: all the Ladies will be taken for FANCHONS, and the plainness of your habit will not hinder you from out-shining all the Queens in the universe.

I have no great inclination to tell stories, which perhaps is nothing but the effect of an ill-grounded Vanity, that makes me prefer the expressing of what I imagine, to the reciting of what I have seen. The profession of a Story-teller fits but awkwardly upon young people, but is downright weakness in old men. When our mind is not arriv'd to its due vigour, or when it begins to decline, we then take a pleasure in telling what does not put us to any great expence of thought. However, I will for once renounce the pleasure which I generally take in my own Imagination, to entertain you with a small Adventure, of which I was an eye-witness at the Hague.

During my residence in that place, the fancy took, one day, the Count DE GUICHE³, and Monsieur DE LA VALIERE⁴, to draw the eyes of the spectators after them: to put which noble design in execution, they both resolv'd that their Dress should have all the magnificence which this part of the world was able to afford, and, at the same time, discover the nicety of their inventions. The Count distinguish'd himself by a thousand singularities: he had a tuft of feathers in his hat, which

² Two Waiting-women of Madam Mazarin's.

³ Armand de Grammont, who died towards the end of the year 1672.

⁴ Brother to the Dutcheffs of la Valiere.

which was button'd up by a buckle of Diamonds, that he could have wish'd to have been larger, for this occasion. He wore about his neck some Point de Venise, which was neither a Cravat nor a Band; but a small Ruff, that might gratify the secret inclination he had contracted for the *Golilia*, when he liv'd at Madrid. After this, Madam, you would expect to find him in a Doublet, after the Spanish manner; but, to your surprize, I must tell you, it was an Hungarian Vest. Next, the ghost of Antiquity haunted his memory; so he cover'd his legs with Buskins, but infinitely sprucer and genteeler than those the antient Romans used to wear; and on which he had order'd his Mistress's name to be written in letters that were extremely well design'd, upon an embroidery of pearls. From his Hat down to his Vest, he had squar'd himself by the odd fancy of the Admirante of CASTILE; Count DE SERINI, was conspicuous in the Vest; and the idea of SCIPIO had made him put on Buskins. As for LA VALIERE, he had apparell'd himself after as extraordinary a manner as he possibly could, but he follow'd too much the French way, and could not raise himself to the perfection of fantasticalness.

This was the equipage of our Gentlemen, when they made their appearance in the Voorhout, which is the place where Persons of Quality use to take the air at the Hague. They had scarce enter'd it, when multitudes ran from all hands to gaze and stare at them; and as every body was surpriz'd at the novelty of the thing, they were at first puzzled, whether to admire it as extraordinary, or to laugh at it as extravagant. In this short uncertainty of thought, Monsieur DE LOUVIGNY^s arriv'd in the

^s Anthony Charles de Grammont, Count de Louvigny, since Duke of Grammont.

the place, and put a stop to their grave contemplation. He wore a plain black suit, and clean linnen made up the rest : but then he had the finest head of hair, the most agreeable face, and the gentlest air that can be imagin'd. His modest deportment silently insinuated the merits of all his excellent Qualities : the Ladies were touch'd, and the Men were infinitely pleas'd. Were it not for you, Madam, the question would be soon decided, and the advantages of your sex lost for ever. You are the only Woman in the world, who are able to make stronger impressions. Having thus describ'd his Charms to you, 'twill be no difficult matter for you to guess the effects of them. In short, Madam, all the spectators were as much affected, as the poor Count and his friend were mortified, to their great disappointment. People still remember at the Hague how triumphantly Monsieur DE LOUVIGNY came off, and still make sport with telling the ill success of the other two Gentlemen. If I were not in England, I should often think on this adventure : but, Madam, you destroy all objects and all ideas ; you would eclipse a thousand MIDDLETONS, and a thousand LOUVIGNYS. What has either sex left to oppose to your Charms ?



FOR



FOR MADAM

DE BEVERWEERT¹.

WE were scarce got three miles from Euston², before we heartily repented our leaving it. The beauty of the Place ; the agreeable manner of living there ; the merit and obliging temper of the Master and Mistress of the house ; the Charms of the *beautiful Egyptian* ; the endearing Qualities of the fair Indifferent, for whom 'tis impossible for any one that sees her to be indifferent ; she whom we always behold with pleasure, and whom we always hear with admiration, that Wit so lively and so just, that Humour so gay and free, with a conduct so just and regular : all these Persons, all these things presented themselves to our imaginations, and convinc'd us, to our sorrow, that happiness is less known, and less valued when possess'd, than when lost.

These melancholy thoughts had lull'd the Ambassador of Portugal³ asleep, out of sympathy, perhaps, with Madam DE BEVERWEERT, who never sleeps so soundly, as when she is in deep affliction. As the Constitutions of people are different, my concern kept me awake to reflect on what we had lost. I entertain'd for some time these sad thoughts, which were not disagreeable ; but one whimsy

¹ See above pag. 209.

² The Earl of Arlington's Country-seat in Suffolk.

³ Don Francisco, Count de Melos.

whimsy ushering in another, I found my self at last in one of DON QUIXOT's Fits ; and being seiz'd, all on a sudden, with the spirit of Chivalry, I cried out with a loud voice, *Ye Knights of Suffolk, ye Palmerins of Bury*⁴, *come and confess to the Knight of the Tagus, and the Norman DON QUIXOT, that all the Oriana's and Angelica's in the world, are not worthy to carry the slippers of the most incomparable Carolina of Euston.*

Transported as I was, and really more a DON QUIXOT than DON QUIXOT himself, I saw a brace of Higlers coming upon the Road, whom I immediately took for two Knights. They had both of them Cudgels in their hands, which I fancied to be Lances, as I did their Caps, which were slouch'd down, like that of my Lord TOWNSHEND, to be Helmets, with the Viser down. This Equipage, which I mistook for a warlike preparation, made me conclude, that Blood and Battle would soon ensue ; for which reason, I thrice cried out, as loud as I was able, *SANCHO, SANCHO, saddle Rozinante, and get Grizzle ready.*

The Doctor⁵, who was behind the Coach, imagining that I call'd him, leapt down immediately, and ask'd me what I wanted. *Saddle Rozinante, SANCHO, with all expedition, for lo ! a new Adventure offers it self.* The honest Doctor thought, that being weary with riding in the Coach, I had a mind to ease my self on Horseback : upon which, he told me, *That they had not even Horses enough for his Excellency's use.* This answer of the Doctor brought me to my self again, and the Dreams of Knight-Errantry which had got into my head, beginning to vanish, the *Knight of Tagus* came by degrees to be the *Portugal Ambassador*, the *Norman*
DON

⁴ *A Town in Suffolk.*

⁵ *One of the Earl of Arlington's Footmen, so nick-nam'd.*

DON QUIXOT changed to ST. EVREMOND; and the brace of Higlens passed quietly by us, with their Cudgels and Caps.

I must needs own, that I made no great sacrifice to Madam DE BEVERWEERT, when I lost my Reason for the love of her. The little I had to part with, made the loss inconsiderable. That indeed of the Ambassador was important, and accordingly he husbanded it much better than I did mine; and you'll find by what I am going to tell you, that he preserv'd it as serene and compos'd, as if he had been altogether unconcern'd.

Coming to a River-side, whose Waters were swell'd by the excessive Rains that had fallen a little before, I represented to him with what ease he might put in execution what Mademoiselle DE LA ROCHE⁶, in a Copy of Verses, once desir'd of him, as a proof of his Passion; which was nothing in the world else, but only to take a civil leap into the Water, and drown himself, in order to gain the reputation of an amorous Heroe. "If my
"Passion for Madam DE BEVERWEERT, said
"be to me, was dishonourable or base, I would
"never scruple to drown my self in such a nasty
"puddle as this: but all my Desires are pure and
"innocent; so that if ever the whim takes me to
"drown my self, I am resolv'd it shall be in clear
"and fair Water, that may bear some resemblance
"to the purity of my Thoughts." My Lord, said I to him, *if you are not to drown till you find out Water as clear as your Understanding, we shall not, in all probability, lose you this good while.*

We pass'd the River with these sorts of Discourses, when CHARLES appear'd, and gallop'd towards

⁶ Mademoiselle de la Roche Guilhen, was then Governess to the Earl of Arlington's only Daughter, who was afterwards married to the Duke of Grafton. Mademoiselle de la Roche is the Author of some French Translations, and of several Romances.

towards us with so good a grace, that one would sooner have taken him for a Knight who was entering the lists in a tournament, than for a Lackey, who came to give us an account of his Errand. I must own, indeed, that his Eloquence was somewhat confus'd when he came to deliver himself; for after he had sputter'd out, *My Lord, Mr. JERMYN, Bury, my Lord CROFTS, and Chively,* some thirty times, all we could pick out of his incoherent Speech was, that CHARLES had found no body at home.

If my concern for leaving so delicious a place as Euston, could have given place to any other vexation, it would have been a great mortification to me, to see the ill success of my Letters, but one thing only could then affect me. So I e'en left it to the care of my Lord Ambassador to make serious reflections upon the absence of Mr. JERMYN.

We laid aside all thoughts of going to Chively, imagining that Mr. JERMYN² was not there, when we found one of his Servants at New-Market, who brought me a Letter from him. This inform'd us, that being acquainted, after his return from Bury, with our design of making him a visit, he conjur'd us to do him that honour, and not to fail him. Accordingly, we went thither, and were very kindly receiv'd, by a Person, who tho he has taken his leave of the Court, has carried the civility and good taste of it into the Country.

While my Lord Ambassador was admiring the Grove, the Gardens, and the Wall-trees; while he was commending the Stables, plucking down this Wall, finishing the House, and contriving a better entrance

² Henry Jermyn, created Baron of Dover in the year 1685. He dyed in 1708. Chively was his Country-Seat, within two miles of New-Market.

entrance to it, I fancied Madam DE BEVERWEERT playing at Billiards, or at Hombre; and sometimes methought I see her put a Pearl in the ear of a certain Knight, as a proper ornament for a person of his gallantry, and which might heighten the merit of his agreeable Civilities.

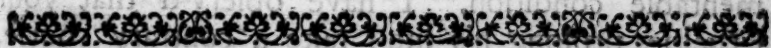
After we had been treated with a noble Dinner, to which I brought more speculation than appetite, we were oblig'd to take our leaves of our Host, and pursue our intended Journey. My Lord Ambassador at our coming out of the Grove, resum'd the affliction he had laid aside for some minutes, and I continued that which I had not quitted. 'Twas nothing else but melancholy; and the fit was so severe, that the worst Road, and the worst Weather in the world were not able to increase it.

The tiresomeness of Audley-End ⁸ made a greater impression upon me. That vast and solitary house increas'd my melancholy, and so discompos'd the Count DE MELOS, that he was scarce able to commend the Gallery, find fault with the Apartments, and make his critical reflections upon the Garden. Then I thought it was a proper time to make a second attempt upon him; and to omit nothing that lay in my power to cure the Despair of my friend, I civilly propos'd to him to hang himself on one of those tall and melancholy Trees, which according to Madam BEVERWEERT, resembled my Lord SUFFOLK: but I found that the Ambassador had got the ascendant over the Lover, and that the Count was a Politician fit to negotiate Affairs at Nimeguen⁹, rather than a desperate Lover, who was resolv'd to put a tragical conclusion to the

⁸ A Country-seat belonging to the Earl of Suffolk.

⁹ Count de Melos was then lately named by the King of Portugal, his Ambassador Plenipotentiary at the Treaty of Nimeguen.

the violence of his Passion. Perhaps the Count DE MELOS would not die of grief in her absence, because he was resolv'd to die of joy when he saw her at his return. Perhaps, he hopes that after he has given peace to Europe, Madam DE BEVERWEERT will not refuse to give him that happy repose which his long services so well deserve. As for my self, I am resolv'd to live, I own it frankly, and would be glad with all my heart to live for ever, that I might for ever adore and serve Madam DE BEVERWEERT.



LETTER

TO MADAM

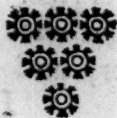
DE BEVERWEERT.

I Have made but a sorry apology with you, for the wrong use I made of the title we had to his Excellency's life. If you would be contented with the death of an ordinary person, I would offer you mine, that you might order Mademoiselle LA ROCHE to dispose of it as you think fit; but my death is not worth the notice. I am inconsiderable in every thing: a small Gamester with Madam MAZARIN; a little Mortal with you, unworthy even to die in your service. I will therefore live, and join my resentment with yours, to revenge you upon the Ambassador, and thereby vindicate and

retrieve the honour of your Charms. I entertain no longer any hopes from the Rivers or Trees of Audley-End. His Excellency is not an Excellency that will either drown, or hang himself : he fattens upon your hard usage ; and your indifference gives him so strong and firm a gate, that I find in him a sufficient stock of health to conclude four Treaties of general Peace, instead of one¹. If you continue to use him ill, he will be in a condition to bury all the Plenipotentiaries at Nimeguen : *ma lasciate far a me, son furbo* ; and I will shew a trick to reduce Count DE MELOS to a most lamentable condition. I have observ'd that your Cruelties prolong his life : take a contrary course, and kill him with Kindness. I remember a certain Amour wherein his Excellency was happy : but he did not mock the favours of the fair Lady, as he does your rigors ; for he had such a fit of sickness upon it, that his Physicians had much ado to restore his health. When one has good Patterns to go by, it is no difficult matter to manage aright : I advise you, Madam, to square your conduct by this example ; and never believe me more, if four days good usage don't put off the Ambassador's journey to Nimeguen, more effectually than the opposition of the Spaniards, and of all the Confederates together, could do.

A

¹ Count de Melos was extremely lean ; and so stagger'd as he walk'd, that one would have thought he was going to fall at every step he set. He died at London at the time he was preparing to cross the sea to repair to Nimeguen.





A

D E F E N C E

Of some Dramatick Pieces of
M. CORNEILLE.

T O

M. DE BARILLON.

I Never doubted your inclination to Virtue : but did not believe you so scrupulous, as not to bear with *RODOLPH* upon the Stage, because she would suggest to her Lovers the design of putting their Mother to death, after their Mother had endeavour'd to persuade her Children to kill their Mistress. I beseech you, Sir, to forget the lenity of our Temper, the innocency of our Morals, the humanity of our Politicks, that you may consider the barbarous Customs, and criminal Maxims of Eastern Princes. When you have reflected, that in all royal families of Asia, Fathers make away with their Children upon the slightest suspicion ; that Children put their Parents to death, thro' an impatience of ascending the Throne ; that Husbands kill their Wives, and Wives poison their Hus-

P 2

bands ;

* *Ambassador Extraordinary from France to King Charles II.*

bands; that Brothers make nothing of murdering Brothers: when, I say, you have consider'd so detestable a Custom, establish'd among the Kings of those Nations, you'll not wonder so much at **RODOGUNA**'s endeavouring to revenge the death of her Husband upon **CLEOPATRA**, secure her life, recover her liberty, and advance a Lover to the Throne, by the destruction of the most wicked Woman that ever lived. **CORNEILLE** has given the young Princes all the affection they ought to have for the best of Mothers; and has made the young Queen take such resolutions as the necessity of her Affairs required.

You'll say, perhaps, that such Crimes may be committed in Asia, but ought not to be represented in France. But what reason induces you to deny our Theatre to a Lady, merely for advising a crime for her own safety, while you grant that favour to those who committed the same Crime, without any provocation? Why should we banish **RODOGUNA** from our Stage, and admit upon it with applause **ELECTRA** and **ORESTES**? why should **ATREUS** be suffer'd to serve up to **THYESTES** his own Children in a feast? or **NERO** to poison **BRITANNICUS**? Why should **HEROD**, King of the Jews, the people whom God loved, be allow'd to put his wife to death; or **AMURAT** to strangle **ROXANA** and **BAJAZET**? And to pass from the Jews and Turks to the Christians, why should **PHILIP II**, the most Catholick Prince, be suffer'd to put **DON CARLOS** to death upon a suspicion not clearly made out? One of the most diverting *Novels*² we have in French, has reviv'd the memory of a thing almost bury'd in oblivion, and has produc'd a Tragedy³ in England,

² *Don Carlos Nouvelle Historique, by the Abbot of St. Real.*

³ *Written by Mr. Otway.*

land, whose subject has pleas'd all Englishmen. RODOGUNA, that poor oppress'd Princess, has not desired the committing of a Crime for the crime-sake; but only her safety, which could not be establish'd but by a Crime: tho' after all, this was more a Crime, with respect to a *Monk*, than with respect to an *Ambassador*; a Crime which MACHIAVEL would have accounted a political Virtue, and which the wickedness of CLEOPATRA may well make pass for a piece of Justice lawfully administer'd.

One thing which you found great fault with, was, that a young Princess should be made capable of so vigorous a Resolution. I am not well acquainted with her age: but I know she was a Queen, and a Widow; and either of these qualities is sufficient to make a Woman lay aside scruples, at any age. Spare, Sir, spare, I beseech you, RODOGUNA. The world will furnish us with greater Crimes than hers, wherein you may make a better use of the virtuous abhorrence you have for villainous Actions.

To the Dutcheß of MAZARIN.

II. **M**Ethinks RODOGUNA is pretty well justified; let's do the same service to EMILIA, with respect to Madam MAZARIN. Suspend your Judgment, Madam, EMILIA is not guilty of any great Crime for exposing CINNA to the danger of a Conspiracy. Condemn her not, lest you condemn your self: 'tis by your own sentiments I design to defend hers, and by HORTENSIA to justify EMILIA.

EMILIA had seen her Family proscrib'd ; her Father murder'd : and what was yet more insupportable to a Roman Lady, she saw the Republick subdued by CESAR AUGUSTUS. The thirst of Revenge, and the design of restoring Liberty, made her look out for friends, to whom the like injuries might inspire the same sentiments ; and whom the same sentiments might unite in the destruction of an Usurper. CINNA, a Nephew of POMPEY, and the only remainder of that great family, who had perish'd in the cause of the Commonwealth, join'd his resentments with those of EMILIA ; and both being animated by the remembrance of their respective Wrongs, as well as by the interest of the Publick, form'd together the bold scheme of that illustrious and celebrated Conspiracy.

In the Conferences that were held for carrying on this design, their hearts united, as well as their minds : but 'twas only in order to add vigour and life to the Conspiracy ; nor did ever EMILIA promise her Love to CINNA, but upon condition that he should entirely devote himself to their Enterprize. Thus they plotted before they loved one another ; and their Passion, which blended its uneasinesses and fears with those that ever attend Conspiracies, was still submissive and subservient to the desire of Revenge, and the love of Liberty.

As their Design was upon the point of execution, CINNA being wrought upon by the confidence and benefits of AUGUSTUS, discover'd to EMILIA a soul affected with remorse, and ready to follow other counsels : but EMILIA, more a Roman than CINNA, reproach'd him with his weakness, and remain'd more firm in her resolution than ever. Hereupon she reviled her Lover, and imposed upon him those Conditions which you could not endure ; but which, Madam, you will certainly approve,

approve, when you have better consulted your own Reason. The desire of Revenge was the first passion of EMILIA: the design of restoring the Commonwealth, join'd it self with that desire; Love was only the result of the Conspiracy, and entred the soul of the Conspirators more like a servant than a master.

Joignons à la douceur de venger nos Parens
La Gloire qu'on remporte à punir les Tyrans;
Et faisons publier par toute l'Italie,
La Liberté de Rome est l'oeuvre d'Emilie;
On a touché son ame, & son coeur s'est épris;
Mais elle n'a donné son amour qu'à ce prix¹.

That is,

'Tis sweet t'avenge a proscrib'd Family,
'Tis glorious to pull down proud Tyranny:
This deed thro' Italy will sound my fame,
And Rome will owe its Freedom to my name.
My heart, 'tis true, was won: but such a prize
Was only to reward the enterprize.

You was born at Rome, Madam, and have there receiv'd a Soul of the same stamp with those of the PORCIA's, and ARRIA's²; whereas the others that are born there, have but common Italian Souls. With this great, this Roman Soul, if you liv'd now-a-days in a Republick that should be oppress'd; if your Parents were out-law'd; your House desolate; and, which is most odious and intolerable to a free-born Person, if one of your

P 4

Equals

¹ Emilia's speech to her Confident in Corneille's Cinna,

² The Wives of Brutus and Portia.

Equals was become your Master : that Dagger you have bought to plunge it into your own breast, upon the prospect of the ruin of your Country, would you not try its edge on the Tyrant, before you used it against your self ? Undoubtedly you would plot : and a miserable Lover who would suggest to you the weakness of a Remorse, would be treated with more severity by HORTENSIA, than CINNA ever was by EMILIA.

I put the case, you and I should live in the same Commonwealth, whose Liberty is oppress'd by an ambitious Fellow-Citizen. In such a deplorable condition I should offer to you an old CINNA, who would make but a very small impresson on your heart : but, however, if you had commanded him to punish the Tyrant, he would not come back to you with qualms of conscience, and selfish considerations. He would look upon the Confidence and Benefits of the new AUGUSTUS as Injuries ; Dangers would but animate him to serve you ; and, in short, he would carry such a generous spirit to the execution of the Enterprize, that you would either pity him dead, for having obey'd your Orders, or commend him alive, for having perform'd them.

How miserable is the Condition of an old Philosopher ! he cares not for Glory, and the best that can befall him, is to have all his services rewarded by a little Praise. Nor is this shew of favour, as vain and empty as it is, granted him but very rarely : and he even finds others more inclin'd to vex, than commend him. God grant the Portuguese Ambassador ³ long to live ! for if he was dead and gone, the Philosopher ⁴ would be next expos'd to the ill usage his Excellency undergoes every day.

To

³ *Count de Melos.*

⁴ *M. de St. Evremond himself.*

*To Messieurs de * * *.*

III. **I**F I sometimes dispute with you, Gentlemen, 'tis only to fill up the vacancy of Play, and to divert the tediousness of a languishing dull Conversation. I contend with design to yield; and bring but weak Reasons to oppose you, being ready prepar'd to acknowledge the superiority of your Arguments.

Upon these Considerations, I have maintain'd that *Le Menteur* † was a good Comedy; that the Subject or Plot of the *Cid* was happy and well laid; and, tho' that Play be not altogether without faults, yet that it appear'd very well upon the Stage. I have likewise maintain'd that *Rodogune* was a very fine Tragedy; and that *Oedipus* ought to pass for a master-piece of Art: could I do you a greater pleasure, Gentlemen, than to give you so just an occasion to contradict me, and to shew the strength and clearness of your Judgment at the expence of mine?

I had maintain'd, that in order to make a fine Play, a man ought to pitch upon a noble Subject, lay the Plot right, pursue it well, and conduct it naturally to its end; that Characters ought to enter into the frame of the Plot, and not the Plot be framed after the drawing of the Characters; that our Actions ought to go before our Qualities and Humours; that we ought to assign Philosophy the province of acquainting us with what Men are, and
Comedy

† That is, *The Liar*.

medy with what they do : in short, that 'tis not human Nature we ought principally to explain, but rather human Condition we ought to represent upon the Stage.

Did I not do you a good turn, Gentlemen, when I made my self ridiculous by such foolish positions? Could I do more for you, than to expose to your censure the uncouthness of an old Taste, which has shewn the refinement of yours? You are in the right, Gentlemen, you are in the right to laugh at the Dreams of ARISTOTLE, and HORACE; the Reveries of HEINSIUS, and GROTIUS; the Caprices of CORNEILLE, and BEN JOHNSON; and the Imaginations of RAPIN, and BOILEAU. The only Rule for Gentlemen, is the Mode. What avails a Reason not establish'd; and who can find fault with a pleasing Extravagance?

I confess times have been, when 'twas necessary both to chuse noble Subjects, and to manage them well: but now-a-days Characters are sufficient; and I beg Mr. BAY'S² pardon for thinking him ridiculous, when he boasts of having found the way to make Plays without a Plot. I must also beg your pardon, Gentlemen; for as you are of the same opinion, I have equally offended you; which obliges me to give you the like satisfaction: but I do not pretend to be reconcil'd with you barely as to Comedy; I hope you will for the future treat me more favourably in every thing, and that Madam MAZARIN will be less opposite to me than she is.

What have I done to your Grace, my Lady Dutchess, to treat me at the rate you do? There's none but I and the Devil of Don QUEVEDO, to whom all contradictory Qualities are ascrib'd³.

You

² See the Rehearsal, a Play written by the Duke of Buckingham.

³ See Don Quevedo's Visions.

You find me insipid in my compliments, you find me biting in telling truth : if I hold my tongue, I am too discreet ; if I speak, I am too free. When I dispute, you are offended at the contention : when I forbear disputing, you look upon my discretion as the effect of scorn and disdain. Do I tell any piece of news ? I am wrong inform'd : do I tell none, I am mysterious. At Hombre I am watch'd as if I were a Sharper ; and yet am cheated as a silly Bubble. I am wrong'd, and yet condemn'd. I am punish'd for other people's faults : every body makes a noise, every body complains ; and I am the only sufferer.

I am oblig'd to you for all these things, Madam ; not to mention that you give the Publick such a Character of me, as you please. You make me reverence those I despise ; despise those I honour ; offend those I fear. Quarter, quarter, my Lady Dutchess ; I yield : there's no Victory in engaging those that have surrender'd themselves. Carry your arms against Rebels ; force the obstinate ; but govern the conquer'd with gentleness. The difference that's now between the one and t'other will last long. A day will come (and that great day is not far off) when Count DE MELOS will no longer murmur at Hombre, and Baron DE LA TAULADE lose without fretting. For my own part, I have abandon'd the *Visionnaires* *, and *Le Menteur* : RACINE is preferr'd to CORNEILLE ; and the Characters before the Plot. I not only renounce my own opinion, Madam, but maintain yours with more resolution than Mr. VILLIERS can shew in maintaining the Beauty of his Relations. I have chang'd the order both of my Praises and Censures : from five a-clock in the evening,

* A Comedy written by M. Desmaretz, and much esteem'd by the late Earl of Dorset, as well as the *Menteur* of Corneille.

vening, I shall blame what you shall judge blameable ; and at midnight I shall commend what you shall think praise-worthy. As the last sacrifice I can make, I shall continue as long as you please the cursed Partnership between the Ambassador of France, Count CASTELMELHOR^s, and my self. Propose any thing that's more difficult ; and your commands, Madam, will enable me to perform it.



A

L E T T E R

T O T H E

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

IF you find any Extravagancies in the little Book I send you, you are oblig'd to excuse them, since you have robb'd me of my Judgment, which might have hinder'd me from committing them to writing. I have been honour'd in my time, with the company of very amiable Persons, to whom I am beholden for leaving me so much good sense as I had occasion for, to esteem their merit, without disturbing my repose : but I have just grounds to complain of you, for plundering me of all my Reason, which the others had left me.

How

^s Don Luis de Vasconcellos and Sousa, Count de Castelmelhor, first Minister and Favorite of Alphonso King of Portugal. After the Revolution that happen'd in that Kingdom in 1667, he was obliged to retire to Turin, from whence he obtain'd leave to come into England, where he staid ten or twelve years.

How unhappy is my condition ! I have lost every thing on the side of Reason, and I see nothing for me to pretend to on the side of Passion. Shall I ask you to love a man of my age ? I have not been so good a Christian as to expect miracles in my favour. If the merit of my Passion could obtain of you a concern for my being old, and a desire that I were young again, I should be content. The favour of a Wish is but a small matter ; pray refuse me not that. It is natural to wish that every thing we love were amiable.

There never was so disinterested a Passion in the world, as mine. I love those you love, nor do I love less those who love you ; I consider your Lovers as your Subjects, instead of hating them as my Rivals : and that which is yours is dearer to me, than that which is against me is hateful to me. As for what relates to the Persons who are dear to you, I take no less a concern in them than you ; my soul carries its movements and affections to the place where yours are ; I relent when you grow tender ; when you languish 'tis the same case with me. The passionate Songs at the Opera make no impression upon me of themselves ; they have no manner of influence over me, but by that which they have over you. I am touch'd to see you touch'd ; and those melancholy Sighs, which, now and then, steal unawares from you, put my heart to no less expence than they do yours.

I have little or no share in causing any of your pains, but I suffer from them as much as you do. Sometimes you produce in us a Passion different from that which you design'd to excite. If you repeat any Verses out of the *Andromache*, you inspire Love with the sentiments of a Mother who would only stir up Pity. You endeavour to make us sensible of her Misfortunes, and you soon see us sensible of your own Charms. Sad and compassionate
expres-

expressions revive secretly in our hearts the Passion which they have for you ; and the grief which you would raise in us for an unfortunate Lady, becomes a natural sense of our own torments.

One should not believe this without making experience of it, at his own cost. Those matters that seem most opposite to tenderness, assume an affecting air in your mouth : your Reasonings, your Disputes, your Altercations, nay, your very Anger have their charms ; so difficult it is to find any thing in you, which does not contribute to the Passion you inspire. Nothing comes from you which is not amiable ; nothing is form'd in you which does not turn to love.

A serious Reflection puts me in mind that you will laugh at me for this Discourse ; but you cannot make merry with my weakness, without being pleas'd with your Beauty ; and I am satisfied with my shame, if it gives you any satisfaction. A man may sacrifice his Repose, his Liberty, and his Fortune : but *Glory*, says MONTAIGNE, *is never sacrificed*. I will make bold to contradict MONTAIGNE in this particular ; and don't refuse to become ridiculous for the love of you.

But upon second thoughts, Madam, we cannot make you a sacrifice of this nature : since a man can never be ridiculous in loving you. A Minister of State renounces his Politicks for you ; and a Philosopher his Morals, without any prejudice to their reputation. The power of an exquisite Beauty justifies all the Passion which it is capable of producing ; and after having consulted my Judgment as nicely as my Heart, I will tell you, without fearing to be ridicul'd for it, that *I love you*.



A

L E T T E R

T O T H E

E A R L O F S T. A L B A N S.

I Have been at Death's door, my Lord, since I had the honour of seeing your Lordship ; and what contributes to make me yet more unhappy, there is no Distemper now stirring at London, but only what I languish under, no Gout, no Rheumatism, nay not so much as the Tooth-ach. My Lord ARLINGTON, to whom you yielded the title of the first gouty Man in England, might now take twenty turns in the Mall, as well as the good Gentlewoman that uses to attend you. As for my self, I am not yet fully restor'd to my health ; and had it not been for some Remedies I met with, I had certainly died.

But why, my Lord, should you resolve to pass the winter in a Country where the Horses are a hundred times better look'd after than we are ? where there are MAYERNES^{*} to cure the diseases of the Race-horses, and little better than Farriers to cure those of the men. If you were possess'd with any of those religious Enthusiasms, which
make

^{*} Sir Theodore Mayerne was a famous Physician in the Reigns of King Charles I. and King Charles II.

make so many Fanaticks weary of their lives, I should be able to account for this strange impatience of yours to die. But, my Lord, if you are a Man like one of us; if you still preserve a natural inclination to live, as Monsieur the Mareschal DE VILLEROY, the Master of the Horse to the King of France², Monsieur DE RUVIGNY, and your other Contemporaries continue to do; why should you so obstinately pitch upon a place where you don't pass one day, without retrenching five or six, at least, of your life?

But I dwell too long upon a Discourse, which I ought to have lightly pass'd over. I must now come to more agreeable ideas. The Dutchess of PORTSMOUTH will give you what share in her Bank you please. My Lord HYDE³ promises to shew you certain Civilities, which will almost amount to a Confidence. My Lord Ambassador offers to give you a full insight into the affairs of Hungary, and the War that the Northern Princes are now going to engage in; and what I esteem much more, the Duke of ORMOND is ready to play with you at Trick-Track without odds. You will tell me now, that you are scarce able to see, and that you are troubled with so many indispositions that the World is weary of you. My Lord, you take the thing wrong: 'tis the Country, and not the World that is weary of you.

In the Country, people judge of you by the weakness of your sight: your Infirmities there are taken for faults; and you can't imagine what a despicable opinion your robust Country Gentlemen have of an infirm Courtier. Here in Town, my Lord, you are valued for the strength of your Judgment;

² Monsieur de Beringhen.

³ Afterwards Earl of Rochester.

ment ; your Infirmities are pitied, and your good Qualities reverenc'd.

What a difference is there then between those two places to live in ! and yet, my Lord, you have chosen that which is so contrary to your Health, and to your Reputation. That which uses to be the greatest punishment of persons in disgrace, you have voluntarily imposed upon your self : you have depriv'd your self of the Society of men that know the world, and with whom you have always lived. A man may comfort himself for the loss of his Fortune, but cannot receive consolation after he has lost the sweetness of agreeable Conversation, and is perpetually persecuted by Impertinents. Relieve your self with Reason as long as you please : the relief of Reason signifies nothing, where the delicacy of one's Taste is offended.

Return, my Lord, return to your friends, that know your merit, as you know theirs. There is not one of them who will not contribute, as far as in him lies, either to your relief, or your pleasure. The politeness of my Lord SUNDERLAND, will soon make you sensible that that sort of life, which you thought the sweetest and most natural, is rude and gross : and that easy, free, and unconstrain'd way of living which he has set up at Court, will for ever make you out of love with the false tranquillity you boast of in the Country. The Dutchess of MAZARIN will ease you of your scruple about Visits ; she will not take it ill that you sit just by her without seeing her ; and, less sensible of the injury she will receive than of the loss you will suffer by it, she will make you taste the sweetness of a Conversation, which is not at all inferior to the charms of her Beauty. For your sake she will suspend her eagerness for Bassett ; and oblige you with that pure and calm Reason, which she refuses us every day. Mr. WALLER has in store a delicious

cious Conversation for you. I am not so vain as to tell you any thing of my own: I had better promise you my services on Sundays, and suffer myself to lose at Chess, every time that Monsieur DE SAISSAC bets on my side. I will say nothing to you of Mistress CROFTS: since she has been *Dutchess of Chastellerault*, I can't tell how she will behave her self towards *the Earl of St. Albans*⁴.

If these temptations are too weak, and you are fully resolved to retire out of the world from this hour; pray consider, my Lord, that a Person of Quality ought to retire into a capital City. Your Reason will steal you out of the world in a City, whenever you please: your Imagination will carry you into the Country, even when you would not have it. Live here, my Lord, like a Philosopher at your own house. 'Twill be a new merit, for which the world will esteem you. To live like a Philosopher in Suffolk, is to make one's self obscure rather than wise; and forgotten by others, instead of knowing one's self.

The greatest Philosophers of Antiquity lived in the finest City of Greece; and he who advised his Disciples to *conceal their Life*⁵, had delicate fine Gardens at Athens, where five or six of his Friends plaid the Philosophers with him. I know not how
to

⁴ *Mistress Crofts, Sister to the Lord Crofts, had been one of the Maids of Honour to the Queen. After she retired from Court, her house became a pleasurable Rendezvous, where the Earl of St. Albans, and two or three more Persons of Quality used to sup almost every night. The Earl of Arran, afterwards Duke of Hamilton, paid assiduous court to that Lady, whereupon the Earl of St. Albans withdrew. M. de St. Evremond in this place rallies this new Intrigue: calling Mistress Crofts Dutchess of Chastellerault; because the Earl of Arran had been in France, to pursue an old claim of the House of Hamilton, to the Dutchy of Chastellerault.*

⁵ See Vol. I. pag. 54.

to find my way from Athens back to London. However, I could wish that you would return thither as soon as I. And now, my Lord, I am here to expect you, and desire you to bring Mr. JERMYN along with you. Restore him to the World, even in spite of himself. It will not be long ere he will return you thanks for a violence so happily committed; neither will you, my Lord, be behind-hand with us long, for owing this Resolution to our advice.



A

L E T T E R

TO THE DUKE OF

BUCKINGHAM.

MY LORD,

MR. BURNET^{*} is so strongly persuaded of the sincerity of your Conversion, that he speaks of it to all your Friends after this rate: *I dare venture my own Salvation upon the same bottom with that of the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, so firm a belief have I of the Reformation of his Life.*

“ Conversion, Mr. BURNET, says Mr. WALLER, have a care what you say; people don’t use to be converted so now-a-days: ’tis neither to you, nor me, nor any person living, that we are beholden for this strange alteration in the

Q 2

“ Duke

^{*} The late Bishop of Salisbury.

" Duke of BUCKINGHAM. 'Tis a new friend
 " of his, but one that has been dead many hundred
 " years since, that has very lately brought about
 " this miraculous change that so surprizes us. I
 " mean PETRONIUS ARBITER, the most de-
 " licate man of his age for Poetry, Painting, and
 " Musick. One that perpetually studied and pur-
 " sued Pleasure, one that turn'd the day into night,
 " and the night into day; but at the same time,
 " one who had so absolute a command over his
 " Vices and Irregularities, that whenever he
 " thought fit, he was one of the most regular
 " men in the universe. The Duke of BUCK-
 " INGHAM, who has long resembled him in a
 " thousand other Qualities, was resolved of late to
 " imitate him too in this. Thus I have shewn you,
 " Mr. BURNET, from whence proceeds this alte-
 " ration in his Grace's Life, which you, it seems,
 " have mistaken for a Conversion."

But with Mr. BURNET's and Mr. WALLER's
 leave, I shall account for it after another manner.
 'Tis a certain Maxim with me, that no man of a
 nice palate can love Vice, when once it ceases to
 be agreeable; therefore I don't wonder that a Per-
 son of a refined taste, takes up with the virtue of
 Continence in the North, where there are no Ob-
 jects to tempt him. But I dare engage, that if
 your Grace were among Beauties that had Charms
 enough to tempt you, we should soon find the
 new Convert of Mr. BURNET, and Mr. WAL-
 LER's new PETRONIUS, to be nothing in the
 world but the true genuine Duke of BUCKING-
 HAM.

Heaven forbid that I should ever persuade you
 to love. But I have another sin to propose to you,
 which of your self you would never guess; and
 yet I recommend it sincerely to you, and from the
 bottom of my heart: I mean Covetousness, which
 in

in my opinion would be more advantageous to your Grace, than the Wisdom of Philosophers, or the Glory of Conquerors. To be short, I should rather chuse to see your Grace resemble SIR CHARLES HERBERT, or any of the Heroes in Lombard-street, than either SOCRATES or CESAR. The greater the difficulty is, the greater is the merit of surmounting it. Now all the world knows that your Grace will find more trouble to imitate the former, than the two latter Gentlemen.

As we don't all on a sudden arrive to the height of Perfection, I do not exact from you that severe discipline of Economy, which makes a man deny himself every thing amidst an affluence of all. What I beg of your Grace, is, that you would have a watchful eye upon those who have the finger of your Money, to keep them honest in spite of themselves. For unless out of tenderness to their Souls, you hinder them from playing the Knaves, I dare swear for them that they will venture Damnation an hundred times a-day, and all in your Grace's service.

If ever you return to London, with a small Retinue, but a great deal of Money in your pocket, you will certainly be the wonder of the whole Nation. If you neglect this advice, the greater part of the world will never be for you, and you must content your self with a few Admirers in private, of whom your most humble Servant shall always be the first.





A

L E T T E R

T O T H E

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

With a DISCOURSE upon
RELIGION.

THE Discourse we had together yesterday in the evening, has been running in my head all night: nor do I wonder at it, Madam; for when a man has had the pleasure of seeing you, and hearing you speak before he goes to bed, he must not expect that of sound sleeping. I dreamt that Monsieur BARILLON argued with a great deal of solidity. Count DE MELOS, who ever prefer'd a submissive mind to reasoning, was willing to yield to your Arguments; and look'd upon your knowledge as an Authority which he ought to reverence.

I confess I was both convinc'd by, and charm'd with, your Reasons; which made their impresson on my mind with all the force of Truth, and insinuated themselves into my heart, with all the allurements of your Person. The Heart, soft and tender as it is, has a natural repugnance to the austerity of Reason: but your Reason has found a
great

great Secret; for it enlightens the mind, and at the same time kindles a passion in the heart. Hitherto Reason was never accounted among the attractives of the fair sex; you are the first that have made it proper to inspire Love. Had it not been for you, Madam, the Truth we search after would have appear'd very harsh to us. Truth which was banish'd common conversation, as impertinent, and suppress'd in a dark recess, as a mover of sedition; Truth, I say, changes its nature in your mouth, and comes out only to reconcile to you the minds of every body. You set it up again in the world, with an entire satisfaction of all that hear you speak.

Not, Madam, but that you have your share of the malignity of nature too. You have sometimes a set design to offend us; and without being a conjurer, a man may discover your malicious intentions: but your Charms are superior to these ill intentions. You please even when you have a mind to do the contrary; and the only difficulty which you may find inseparable, is not to please.

Truth can bear no longer the Violence you have offer'd to it: and therefore will resume the dryness and austerity you have taken from it. I am going to restore it its natural qualities; and you'll be soon sensible of it, Madam, upon perusal of the small Discourse I send you herewith.

A DISCOURSE.

“ As soon as we have lost the taste of Pleasures,
 “ our fancy furnishes us with agreeable Ideas, which
 “ supply the place of sensible things. The Mind
 “ endeavours to make up lost pleasures, and so goes
 “ to seek advantages in the next World, when the
 “ enjoyments that affected the Body are fled from
 “ us.

“ A disgust for Libertinism and Debauchery raises sometimes in us a desire to turn devout ; but
 “ as soon as we are settled in a more religious and
 “ holy way of living, we spend our days in endeavouring to comprehend what cannot be comprehended ; and these barren and empty Contemplations sometimes produce irksom Reflections on
 “ the torment we suffer, for a Good opposite to the
 “ Senses, little known to Reason, and faintly conceived by an uncertain and unsure Faith. From
 “ hence spring the greatest disorders and irregularities in Monasteries : For when the Felicity which
 “ is promised to recluse religious persons happens to
 “ appear doubtful, the certain Ill they must undergo becomes insupportable to them.

“ The variety of Tempers has a great share in the diversity of Opinions men entertain about things supernatural. Soft and tender Souls naturally incline to the love of God ; and the timorous to the fear of Hell ; the irresolute lie in doubt ; and the wise stick to what's most solid, without examining what's most true. The docible acquiesce ; the opiniated grow obstinate in the Sentiments they have either received from others or form'd themselves ; and the sticklers for Reason, will be convinc'd by proofs which they cannot find.

“ *When Men, said Mr. WURTS¹, have once taken out of Christianity what they have foisted into it, there will be but one Religion, as plain in its Doctrine, as pure in its Morals.*

“ As we do not receive our Belief from Reason², so neither does Reason make us change our Belief. A secret disgust for old Opinions, makes us
 “ renounce

¹ General of the Dutch Troops, in the War of 1672.

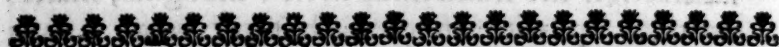
² See M. Bayle's Philosophical Commentary on these words of JESUS CHRIST, *Compel them to come in.* Chap. x.

“ renounce the Religion we have been bred in ; the
 “ satisfaction the mind finds in new thoughts, makes
 “ us take up with another ; but yet when a man
 “ has changed his Religion, if he uses strong argu-
 “ ments against the Errors he has abandon’d, he has
 “ but very weak ones to maintain the truth of the
 “ Faith he has embrac’d.

“ Doctrine is contentious every where ; and will
 “ eternally afford matter of controversy in all Reli-
 “ gions ; but we may agree upon what relates to
 “ Morals. The World are unanimous and of the
 “ same opinion as to the commands God has laid
 “ upon us, and the obedience we owe to him ; for
 “ in this case God manifests himself to men in things
 “ which men know and are sensible of. As for
 “ Mysteries, they are above the reach of human un-
 “ derstanding ; and ’tis in vain we endeavour to
 “ know what’s beyond our Knowledge, and is nei-
 “ ther the object of our Senses, nor of our Reason.
 “ Custom authorizes the discoursing about it, but
 “ Grace alone can inspire the belief of it.

“ It is not in our power to believe, either what
 “ others please, or even what we desire. The Un-
 “ derstanding cannot acquiesce but in such things as
 “ appear evident to it ; but the Will ought to sub-
 “ mit to the Commands it receives.





THE
C H A R A C T E R
O F T H E
DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

I AM unjustly accused for having too great a Complaisance for Madam MAZARIN: for in truth, there is no Person that she has greater reason to complain of, than my self. For six months together I have been maliciously spying out something in her, which might displease me, but in spite of all my endeavours, I could discover nothing there that was not too lovely, and too charming. An ill-natur'd curiosity makes me examine every Feature in her face, with a design either to meet there some shocking irregularity, or some disgusting disagreeableness. But how unluckily do I succeed in my design! every Feature about her has a particular Beauty, that does not in the least yield to that of her Eyes, which by the consent of all the world are the finest in the universe. One thing there is that entirely confounds me: her Teeth, her Lips, her Mouth, and all the graces that attend it, are lost amongst the great variety of Beauties in her Face; but if we compare them to these fine mouths, that make the greatest Charm of those Persons whom we most admire, they drown, and eclipse every

every thing else, and what's but indifferent in her, will not suffer us to consider what's most remarkable in others. The malice of my Curiosity does not stop here. I proceed to spy out some defect in her shape; and I find I know not what Graces of Nature so happily, and so liberally scatter'd in her person, that the genteelness of others only seems to be constraint and affectation.

When Madam MAZARIN pleases me too much in her negligence, I advise her to have recourse to Art, hoping that her ornaments and her dress will not fail to ruin her native Charms: but scarce has she dress'd her self, but I am forc'd to confess, that I never saw in any person so great and so noble an Air as hers. Nor is my ill-nature satisfied with this. I have a mind to see her in her chamber, amongst her Dogs, her Monkeys, and her Birds, hoping that the disorder of her dress, will make her lose the majesty of that Beauty, that astonish'd us at Court. But here it is, that she is a hundred times more amiable; here it is, that a more natural Charm gives us a disgust to all that art and industry can do; here it is that the freedom of her wit and of her humour leaves none to the person that beholds her.

What could the greatest of her enemies do more? I wish some sickness might invade her to undermine her Graces: but, alas! we are more to be pitied than she in her Pains. Her very Pains have a charm that does us a greater mischief, than the sufferer by them.

After having relented and grieved at her Indisposition, I endeavour to give her an occasion to abuse me, that I may be exasperated against her: with this design I purposely contradict all she says; I provoke her Anger by contention; I put her in the way to wrong me at play; I suggest to my self all the means of my oppression that I may be furnish-
ed

ed with a pretence for a real Resentment. But, alas! to what purpose is all this troublesom Industry? Her ill treatment pleases instead of provoking; and her injuries, more charming than the caresses of others, are so many Charms, that enslave me to her will. I pass from her serious moments, to those of her gaiety; for as I am sometimes willing to see her serious, out of hopes to find her less agreeable; so am I desirous to see her more free, thinking to find her indiscreet. But when she's serious, she makes us admire her good Sense; when free and jovial, her Sprightliness.

She knows as much as a Man can know; and she conceals her Knowledge with all the discretion that becomes a prudent Woman. She has some acquired Learning, which never betrays the Study she employ'd to gain it. She has some happy Thoughts, that are as far from an affected Art that displeases us, as from a natural Luxuriancy that offends us.

I have seen some Ladies that have made conquests by the advantage of their Beauty, and lost them again thro' a defect of Wit. I have seen others that engag'd us to them, by being beautiful and witty together; but discourag'd us from a farther pursuit by their indiscretion, fickleness and avarice. But in Madam MAZARIN, if you pass from her Face to her Wit, from the qualities of her Mind to those of her Soul, you will find that every thing attracts you, that every thing fastens and binds you, and that nothing can disengage you. We defend our selves from the Charms of other Ladies by our Reason: but 'tis Reason that subjects us to her Power. With other Ladies our Love generally begins, where our Reason ends: here our Love cannot end, unless we lose our Reason.

What I observe to be most extraordinary in Madam MAZARIN, is, that she daily inspires new Desires;

Desires; and that after a long familiarity, she makes us feel all the tender sweetness of a growing Passion. She is the only person of her Sex, for whom we may be eternally constant; and with whom one may enjoy every hour the diversion of Inconstancy. We never change for her Person: we change every moment for her Features; and relish, in some manner, all that new, that lively joy, which unfaithfulness in Love makes us feel.

Sometimes her Mouth is abandon'd for her Eyes; sometimes we leave her Eyes to admire her Mouth, her Cheeks, her Nose, her Eyebrows, her Forehead, her Hair, nay, her Ears, (so much pains has Nature taken to make every thing perfect in this beautiful body!) her Ears attract our inclinations in their turn, and make us taste the pleasure of change. To consider her Features separately, one would be apt to say, that there is a secret jealousy between them; and that they are still upon the watch to steal Lovers from one another: To consider them in conjunction, and as they are united and joyned together, we see them form a Beauty, that neither suffers Inconstancy for it self, nor Fidelity for others. I have said enough of what's to be seen: let us now guess at hidden Beauties; and boldly affirm, by conjecture, that the Merit of what we do not see far surpasses all that we have seen.



A

LETTER

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

I Read juſt now, with Monſieur VAN BEUNINGEN¹, the Copy of Verſes you did me the honour to ſend me². That Ambaſſador, who has paſs'd his life in ſtudy, as well as in the management of affairs, thinks them very fine; and for my own part, I am of opinion, that there are in that little piece ſome verſes of as high and noble ſtrain as I have ſeen this good while, in our language. What makes me value them the more, is, becauſe there's Novelty and good Senſe; which are not eaſily match'd. For our Novelties have often a caſt of extravagance; and the good Senſe which is often found in our Writings, is generally borrow'd from Antiquity, rather than of our own growth. I would have the Moderns inſpired by the wit of the Ancients, but would not have them ſteal it, and paſs it for their own. I allow 'em to teach us how to think well, but hate to make uſe of their Thoughts.

What

¹ Ambaſſador of the States General to King Charles II.

² The Duke of Nevers, Brother to the Dutcheſs of Mazarin, was the Author of thoſe Verſes.

What remains of their Works had the advantage of Novelty, when they wrote it, whereas, what we borrow from them now, is grown obsolete by length of time; and is dropt, as it were dead and extinguish'd, into the brain of our Authors.

What have we to do with a new Author, who puts forth nothing but old Productions; who sets himself out with the fancies of the Greeks, and imposes on the world their Knowledge for his own? A vast number of Rules, made three thousand years ago, are set up to be the Standard of what's writing now-a-days; without considering that neither the Subjects to be treated, nor the Genius to be regulated are the same.

If we should make Love like ANACREON and SAPPHO, nothing would be more ridiculous; if like TERENCE, nothing more Plebeian, or Citizen-like; and if like LUCIAN, nothing more gross and lewd. All ages have a peculiar character proper to themselves: they have their Politicks, their Interests, their Affairs; and, in some measure, their Morals, having their particular Virtues and Vices. I own 'tis all Humanity still: but Nature is various in men; and Art, which is nothing but an imitation of Nature, ought to vary as she does. Our impertinences are not the same which HORACE ridicul'd; nor are our vices the same which JUVENAL rebuk'd: we must therefore make use of other raillery and reproofs.

I am oblig'd to the Duke of NEVERS: for I have a long while been looking for Novelty, and he has brought it in my way. I find in him one who thinks himself what he writes, and gives his own turn to his expressions.

*Moy qui n'ai dans mes Vers échapés au hazard,
Que l'audace pour regle, Et le bon-sens pour art.*

If *Chance*, *Boldness*, and *Good-sense* produce so many Beauties, I advise Poets to lay aside all Rules of Art, and to give a loose to their natural Genius.

*Pour orner le Francois de nouvelles parures,
Je bazarde en mes Vers d'insolentes figures.*

He who ventures upon such *insolent Figures*, is sure to have none but noble ones: 'tis a happy boldness, which has nothing extravagant or false in it; it is a flash of imagination, which judgment may own for one of its lights.

I know not whether the advantages which the Duke of NEVERS ascribes to Madam DE LA FAYETTE, and to Monsieur DE MERE', are sincere. Their merit persuades they are so: otherwise I should suspect the niceness of the turn; and be afraid that there might be a banter concealed under the *Sublime* of the one, and the *various Charms* of the other. The Praise he gives to Monsieur BOURDELOT is more plainly express'd. For my own part, I should bestow no less on his Person; but I should take care that my commendations should not have so near a relation to his Profession. In my opinion, Physic kills more than it cures; and nothing less than your Brother's Poetry, could restore the honour of a Science, which that of MOLIERE had run down. To be free with you, I would retrench something from the skill of the Physician, to bestow more, if possible, on the wit and knowledge of the Gentleman.

I have more veneration for the Court of Rome, than for the Faculty of Paris; and tho I have full liberty to speak of the Pope, in a Country where they burn him yearly, I still say nothing of his Elogy, save only, that St. PETER ought to be jealous of it:

it: for it is more easy to found a State than to reform it; to settle order in it, than to restore it.

The caution you shew whenever you speak of your Husband, makes me pass slightly over *Orgon*, and my discretion, founded on yours, takes away from me the idea of the Duke of MAZARIN. But a man who should *beat the price of his Salvation with money in hand*, would give me an ill opinion of the chapman that purchases Heaven, and still a worse of those that sell it.

Let's return to the beauty of those Verses, which cannot be the same throughout. The elevation of the mind leaves some little things for exact Criticks to lay hold on; and it is a comfort which great Wits ought not to grudge those of a moderate size. Let poor wretches, to whom Nature has not been indulgent, put themselves as forward as they can by the labour of so crabbed a study: for my own part, I have run over with pleasure some places that transport me; and my Admiration leaves me no room for the spleen of Censure.

It's far easier to praise the King in prose, than in verse. Verses, with all the pomp of Poetry, fall short of the magnificence of the Subject; whereas in Prose a plain truth, is a great Elogy. One needs but barely to relate what the King has done, to efface all that has been written of others. The Duke DE NEVERS has undertaken a more difficult task: he has endeavour'd to find out thoughts that might equal the atchievements of his Heroe. The design was bold; nor was he altogether unsuccessful in it: for if he comes much short of the glory of him he commends, he raises himself insensibly above the Genius of all those that have commended him.

*Qui peindra les beaux traits de sa gloire immortelle?
Le pinceau trembleroit entre les mains d' Appelle.*

R

Quel

*Quel bonheur d'être nez au Siecle de LOUIS!
 Admirons, Bourdelot, ses exploits inouïs,
 Que nous pouvons tous voir, que nous pouvons écrire,
 Et plaignons l'avenir, qui ne peut que les lire.*

I should lament the condition of our descendants, if my own were not more to be lamented. They will live one day; they will enter the world out of which I am upon the point of going; and in which I am reduc'd to read over the King's exploits, without being allow'd to be an eye-witness of them, any more than they. 'Tis a great misfortune for a man to pass away his life at a distance from his Empire: but then if Fortune had not banish'd me from it, I should not have the happiness to live in yours. You inspire Passion in every thing that is capable of it; and Reason yields to you even those that are past any sense of passion.



A

L E T T E R

T O

C O U N T D' O L O N N E.

I Know not why you should admire my Verses, since I don't admire them my self; for I must inform you, that in the opinion of a celebrated master in Poetry, a Poet is always the most affected with his own Compositions. As for my self, I acknowledge abundance of Faults in mine, which I might correct, if exactness were

⁊ *Aristotle.*

were not extremely troublesome to my humour, and did not take up more time than a person of my Age can spare. Besides, I have another excuse, which, if I am not mistaken, you will allow of: Essays are seldom Master-pieces; and the Praises I bestow upon the King, being the first true and sincere I ever writ, it can be no wonder I had no better success. As for those you bestow upon me, they are an ingenious Irony, of which rhetorical Figure, I was formerly so great a Master, that the Mareschal of CLEREMBAUT thought no body but my self capable to vie with you in it. You ought not to have employ'd it against a man who has lost the use of it; and who is so entirely your humble servant as I am. You see I am pretty well upon my guard against Ridicule; and yet in spite of all my precautions, I cannot forbear to indulge my self in the praises you give me upon the score of my Taste. 'Tis your interest it shou'd be good, true, and delicate; for the idea of yours, which I always preserve by me, is the rule of mine.

That miracle of Beauty ² which I formerly saw at Bourbon, is the same miracle of Beauty which I daily see at London. Some additional years have given her more wit, and taken away none of her charms.

*Fair Eyes so sweetly charming and divine,
That cause such transports where you shine,
Oh! ne'er to grief your chrystal treasures pay,
Your pearls on grief are thrown away.
Tears from those orbs let no misfortunes move;
So rich a tribute's only due to Love.*

R 2

As

² *The Dutches of Mazarin.*

As for the wicked expedients you advise me to, I am not in a condition to practise them, neither is she in humour to suffer them. If I must sit up all night, they tell me I have not yet seen forty. If I am to take a long journey in the wind and rain, what a noble constitution has M. DE ST. EVREMOND ! But if I lay my head close to hers, smell to her hair, or kiss the tip of her ear, I am presently asked, whether I knew Madam GABRIELLE³, and if I made my court to MARY DE MEDICIS ? But my Paper fails me. Place me, I pray, among your solid Friends, immediately after M. DE CANAPLES⁴. The miracle of love presents her service to you.

FRIEND-

³ Gabrielle d' Estrées, Mistress to Henry IV. of France.

⁴ Alphonse de Crequi, Marquis de Canaples, since Duke of Lesdiguières.





FRIENDSHIP

WITHOUT

FRIENDSHIP.

TO THE

EARL OF ST. ALBANS¹.

I Was a long while of opinion, that Women have no inconsiderable advantage over us ; in that we are loved only by the less wise ; and that the wisest of Men thought fit to love them all his life-time. The politest Men in Antiquity, the most virtuous, and the greatest, I mean ALCEBIADES, AGESILAUS, and ALEXANDER, were acquainted with other charms besides those of the Ladies. The most magnanimous among the Romans ; SCIPIO, the honour of a Republick, which can be reproach'd with nothing, but her ingratitude towards him ; SCIPIO, I say, is commended for continency, which was no other than his want of taste, or sensibility for the Fair. CESAR, whose name alone is a Panegyrick, shew'd no averseness to any sort of Love. SOLOMON was altogether unacquainted with such various likings and disquits : for he wholly devoted himself

R 3

to

¹ The Dutchess of Mazarin caus'd this Piece to be printed at London in 1681, and put this roguish Title to it.

to the Female Sex, being insensible of any other charms but theirs.

'Tis somewhat surprizing, that the politeſt, the greateſt, the beſt of Men, and the moſt magnanimous, could forbear the love of Women; and as if this kind of Love was reſerv'd for the wiſe, that SOLOMON made it his principal buſineſs of his Life. It is ſurprizing, I own it; but after due reflection, I find nothing in it that we ought to wonder at. The Polite among the Antients had a great averſeneſs to all manner of ſubjection: and in the purſuit of all Pleaſures, they ſtill retain'd the liberty of paſſing from one Sex to the other, according to their fancy. The love of Women would have ſoftern'd the courage of Men; the virtue of the good Men had been adulterated by it; and the ſpirit of the magnanimous might have been weakned: but true Wiſdom ran no great danger with the Female Sex. The wiſe Man, ſtill ſuperior to their weakneſs, their unſteadineſs, and their caprice, can either govern them at his pleaſure, or part with them when he thinks convenient. While he beholds others in ſlavery, and toſs'd by an unfortunate Paſſion, he enjoys a ſteadineſs and calmneſs, that ſooths his pain, and takes off the ſenſe of a thouſand diſquietudes which are not cured by Reaſon alone. Not but that he may fall into ſome error; for there's no ſuch thing as conſtant ſtability in human nature: but it is not long before he recovers his wandering Judgment, and comes to re-ſettle his former Tranquillity.

The world has ſeen an egregious inſtance of this in SOLOMON, who loved the Fair Sex all his life-time; but differently, according to the different periods of his Age. When young, he had all the tenderneſs of a Lover: of which his ſoft and melting expreſſions are ſufficient proof; and 'tis but reading his *Song* or *Canticle* to be convinc'd

vinc'd of it. I must beg pardon for not interpreting it in a mystical sense. I shall never be persuaded to believe that SOLOMON intended to make our Saviour JESUS CHRIST speak to his Church with more effeminate sentiments, and more lascivious expressions than CATULLUS used for LESBIA, and OVID for CORINNA: in verses more tender than those of PETRARCH for LAURA; and more gallant than those of VOITURE for BELIZA. Neither do I think that SOLOMON spoke to a Wife: a dear Mistress must undoubtedly be the object of such Love, such Raptures, such Eagerness. However, he loved less than he was belov'd: and he knew by experience that the Women were more passionate than the Men. This is a truth which even the Holy Scripture has thought fit to confirm: for, to express the sentiments which DAVID and JONATHAN had one for the other, it says, *they loved one another with the Love of a Woman*²: to denote the tenderest Love.

SOLOMON, in the vigour of his Age, shew'd less tenderness and sincerity in his Affections and Amours. He made use even of the fame of his Wisdom to make himself belov'd. 'Tis by that means he got so much Gold from the Queen of SHEBA, a Princess so fondly intoxicated with his Wisdom, that she left her Kingdom to see a Sage. When SOLOMON grew in years, he alter'd his conduct with the Fair. Having lost the merit of pleasing, he pursued that of obeying. He might have commanded, and forc'd Love, but would not be beholden for it to Power; and endeavour'd by suppleness and submission to make up his past Endearments.

R 4

² In the 2d book of Samuel Chap. i. ver. 26. There is in the Hebrew, Your Love for me was extraordinary, it exceeded the Passion of Women. Our Translation says, Thy Love to me was wonderful, passing the Love of Women. David speaks of his dear Jonathan, whom he had lately lost.

dearments. Tho a King, tho a wise Man, he becomes a slave to his Mistresses in his old Age ; being of opinion, that in that melancholy and unfortunate period of our Lives, we ought, as far as possible, to steal away, as it were, from our selves ; and that 'tis better for us to give up our selves to the charms of a Beauty that enchants our ills, than to sad Reflections and frightful Imaginations.

I am not ignorant that SOLOMON has been censured for this last conduct : but tho his Reason appear'd weaken'd, he was nevertheless wise with respect to himself. He thereby soften'd his sorrow, sooth'd his pains, diverted the ills he could not overcome ; and Wisdom, which could no longer find out means to make him happy, made good use of diversions to render him less miserable. We scarce begin to grow old, but we begin to be displeased with our selves, thro' a disgust of our selves, which secretly grows within us. Then our Soul, void of Self-love, is easily filled with the love of external objects ; and such of these as would formerly have pleas'd us but indifferently, thro' the resistance they met with from our own sentiments, charm and captivate us thro' our weakness. Hence it comes to pass, that Mistresses dispose of their old Lovers, and Wives of old Husbands, as they please : hence it was that SYPHAX abandon'd himself to the will of SOPHONISBA, and that AUGUSTUS was govern'd by LIVIA. And not to fetch all my examples from Antiquity, this made Monsieur DE SENECTERRE³, a person worthy to be named with Kings and Emperors, upon the bare score of being a man of true honour ; this, I say, made that Courtier, who was equally wise, nice, and polite, supinely give way to the fondness of

³ Father to the Marechal of la Ferté.

of a young Woman he had married in his latter days. *If you knew*, said he to his Friends, *the condition of a person of my Age, who has nothing but himself to entertain in his Solitude, you would not wonder at my resolution to have a Companion that pleased me, let the purchase cost what it will.* For my part, I never blamed him for it : and indeed, how can one censure what SOLOMON heretofore, and the Mareschal D'ESTRÉES⁴ of late years, have authoriz'd by their examples ? However, in spite of all these Authorities, I should have a great esteem for a man who should have strength enough to preserve the taste of Liberty to the end of his Life.

Not that a full independency is always to be commended : for, such free and disengaged Gentlemen, often become indifferent and ungrateful. Let us avoid the two extremes of absolute Subjection, and entire Freedom ; and content our selves with an easy and honourable intercourse, as agreeable to our Friends as to our selves. If any thing more is required of me than a hearty concern, and sincere endeavours, for the interest of those I love ; any thing more than my small assistance, as weak as 'tis, when they are in distress ; or more than discretion in conversation, and secrecy in affairs of moment, let them seek for a Friend elsewhere ; for I can afford them no more.

Violent Passions are unequal, and portend the distraction of change. In Love, we must leave those excesses for the POLEXANDER'S and the CYRUS'S of our *Romances* : and in Friendship, for ORESTES and PYLADES of our *Plays*. These are things we read, and see represented, which are not to be found in the commerce and practice of the

⁴ The Mareschal d'Estrées married to his third Wife, at 91 years of Age, Gabriele de Longueval, Daughter to M. Manicamp.

the world. And indeed, 'tis well they are not ; for they would produce very extravagant adventures.

What did ORESTES ever do, that great and illustrious example of Friendship? what did he ever do, I say, that ought not to strike us with horror? He kill'd his own Mother, murder'd PYRRHUS, and fell into such strange convulsions of fury, that it cost some Players their Lives^s, who endeavour'd to top his Character. Let us carefully observe the nature of those entire Friendships, and Engagements which are so cry'd up, and we shall find them to be made up of fullen black Melancholy ; the chief ingredient in the composition of all Man-haters. And indeed, the reducing ones self to love but one Person, is a disposition to hate all the rest : and what is taken for an admirable virtue with respect to a private person, is a great crime towards all the world. He that makes us lose the conversation of the rest of mankind, by deserting them as he has done, makes us lose more than he is worth, let his merit be never so great. Let us pretend to as great disinterestedness as we please ; let us confine all our desires to the purity and excellence of our Passion, conceiving no good but what results from it : yet, we shall languish and pine in this refined Friendship, unless we draw from general Society, those conveniencies and delights that animate private Conversation.

The Union of two Persons entirely devoted to one another : that sublime union wants yet the assistance of foreign things to excite the taste of Pleasure, and the sense of Joy. Notwithstanding
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^s *Montfleuri, a celebrated French Player, made such extraordinary efforts in acting the part of Orestes in Racine's Andromache, that he fell sick upon it, and died. Mondori, another French Tragedian, had the same Fate in the representation of Tristan's Mariana.*

all the boasted sympathy between them, the participation of Counsels and Secrets, it will hardly yield satisfaction in proportion to the vexation and uneasiness it occasions. 'Tis in the intercourse of the world, and amongst diversions and business, that the most agreeable and profitable Friendships are form'd. I set a greater value upon the correspondence between the Mareschal D'ESTREES and Monsieur DE SENECTERRE, who liv'd fifty years at Court in an uninterrupted intimacy; I more esteem the confidence the Prince DE TURENNE had in the Marquis DE RUVIGNY, for forty years together, than those Friendships so often instanc'd, and never practis'd amongst men. As nothing contributes more to the happiness of Life than Friendship, so nothing disturbs its repose so much as Friends, if we have not judgment enough to chuse them well. Importunate friends make us wish they were indifferent, so they were more agreeable. The morose give us more uneasiness by their humour, than they do us good by their services. The imperious tyrannize over us: we must hate whatever they do, be it never so agreeable; we must love what they love, tho we think it nauseous and displeasing. We must do violence to our Nature; enslave our Judgment; renounce our Taste; and under the fair name of *Complaisance*, pay a general submission to all they think fit to impose upon us with authority. Jealous friends are an insupportable plague: they hate all Advice that is not of their own giving: and as they are angry at all the good that happens to us without their interposition, so they rejoice at all the ill that befalls us by following the directions of others. There are men in the world, that make profession of Friendship, and value themselves upon taking our parts at random, and upon all occasions: and such vain Friends serve for nothing else but to incense the world against us by their imprudent

dent contests. There are others that justify us when no body accuses us ; who by their indiscreet zeal, bring us into affairs where we had nothing to do ; and draw inconveniences upon us, which we would willingly avoid. Let who please be contented with such Friends. As for me, I am not satisfy'd with a man's good intention, that proves to my prejudice : I would have it attended with Discretion and Prudence. A man's Affection makes me no amends for the mischief his Rashness has done me. I return him thanks for his impertinent zeal, and advise him to seek to be applauded for it amongst Fools. If the light of the understanding does not guide the motions of the heart, Friends are more apt to vex and disquiet, than to please us ; and more capable to hurt, than to serve us.

In the mean time, we hear nothing talk'd of but the Heart, in all the discourses about Love and Friendship. Poets become troublesome upon this theme ; Lovers tedious, and Friends ridiculous. We see nothing in our Plays but King's Daughters yield the Heart, but refuse the Hand ; or Princesses that give the Hand, but cannot consent to yield the Heart. Lovers become nauseous by perpetually demanding the sincerity of the Heart ; and Friends setting up for affected Precisians, challenge it for their due as well as Lovers. This betrays a very imperfect knowledge of the nature of it : whereas for a little irregular heat, for some unequal and uncertain tenderness it may sometimes afford, there's no caprice, ingratitude, and infidelity, but we ought to apprehend from it.

Begging pardon of the whimsies of Poets, and imaginations of Painters, we call Love very improperly *blind*. LOVE is a Passion of which the heart makes generally an ill use. The Heart is a blind guide which leads us into all our errors. 'Tis that which prefers a fool before a man of sense, that
makes

makes us doat on ugly Objects, and disown very lovely ones ; that bestows it self on the most deform'd, and refuses it self to the most beautiful. 'Tis that, in short, that sets JOCONDE's friend a rambling, thro' the jealousy of a Dwarf⁶.

'Tis that which disorders the most regular ; that bereaves the reserved and discreet of their Virtue, and undermines the Devotion of the greatest saints among the fair Sex. It pays as little regard to rules in a Convent, as to duty in a private Family ; 'tis faithless to a Husband, but much more so to a Lover : it discomposes the former, and distracts the latter. It acts without either council or knowledge : it rebels against Reason, that should be the guide ; and being secretly moved by hidden springs it does not conceive, it bestows and withdraws its affections without reason ; engages it self without design ; breaks off without observing any decorum ; and, in short, occasions strange follies, that make a great deal of noise in the world, and equally disgrace all the parties concern'd in them.

This is the common fate of Love and Friendship grounded on the Heart. As for those just and reasonable ties over-ruled by Judgment, there's no rupture to be apprehended : for either they last for life, or insensibly wear off with discretion and decency. It is certain that Nature has placed in our hearts a Loving Faculty, (if I may so speak) some secret principle of Affection, some hidden stock of Tenderness, which opens and communicates it self in time. But the use of it has been no farther receiv'd and authoriz'd amongst men, than as it may render life more easy and happy. 'Tis upon this score that EPICURUS recommended it so much to his Disciples : That CICERO exhorts us to it
by

⁶ See in the *Tales or Contes de la Fontaine*, the Tale call'd Joconde.

by arguments, and invites us to it by several examples: That *SENECA*, as stern and rigid as he is, becomes soft and tender as soon as he begins to speak of Friendship: That *MONTAIGNE* refines upon *SENECA* in more lively expressions: and That *GASSENDUS* sets forth the advantages of that Virtue, and as far as in him lies, disposes his Readers to acquire them.

All men of sense, honesty, and good breeding, agree with Philosophers; upon this foundation, that *Friendship* ought to contribute more than any thing besides to our happiness. And indeed, Man would hardly depart from himself, as it were, upon any account whatever, to unite himself to another, if he did not find more pleasure in this union, than in the first sentiments of self-love. The whole world affords nothing more precious and valuable than the Friendship of wise men. That of others, as it is boisterous and disorderly, so it disturbs the peace of publick Society, and the pleasures of private Conversations. 'Tis a savage Friendship, which reason disowns, and which we could wish to be the lot of our enemies, to be reveng'd of them for their hatred to us.

But let Friends be never so sincere and regular, 'tis yet inconvenient to have too many of them. If our cares are divided into many streams and channels, we can neither attend our own concerns, nor those of other men, with the application they deserve: for when the soul diffuses it self undistinguishably upon all objects, our Affections are so distracted, that they properly fix upon nothing. Let us live for a few that live for us: let us seek an easy and agreeable Conversation, with every body; and our private advantages with those that can promote our interest.



A
L E T T E R
T O
MONSIEUR JUSTEL.

S I R,

I AM overjoy'd to see you in England; the conversation of so knowing, and so inquisitive a man as your self, will afford me no little satisfaction: but give me leave not to approve the resolution you have taken to quit France, so long as I see you entertain so tender and so fond a remembrance of that Kingdom. As often as I see you doleful and desolate, wishing for Paris on the banks of our Thames, you put me in mind of the poor Israelites bewailing their beloved Jerusalem on the banks of Euphrates. Either live happy in England, with the enjoyment of full Liberty of Conscience; or make shift to bear small hardships, as to Religion, in your own Country, to enjoy there all the conveniences of life.

Is it possible that Images, Ornaments, small Ceremonies; that little Novelties, which you account superstitious,

A person of merit and learning, much versed in the Knowledge of Books, who came over into England with all his family in October, 1681. Some years after he was made the King's Library-Keeper.

perstitious, and we religious ; that certain Questions, debated with more subtlety for the reputation of the learned Disputants, than knowledge and candour for our edification : is it possible, in short, that differences, either so inconsiderable, or so ill grounded, should disturb the tranquillity of Nations, and occasion the greatest misfortunes that befall men ? 'Tis a commendable thing, I confess, to *worship God in Spirit and Truth* ; that first Being, that supreme Intelligence, deserves our most purify'd and exalted speculations : but when we endeavour to discharge our souls from all commerce with our senses, can we assure our selves that an abstracted understanding will not lose it self in wandering thoughts, and lead us into more Extravagancies, than it will discover Truths ? Whence think you came all the absurdities of so many Sects, but from deep meditations, wherein the mind, after its dozing and dreaming, meets with nothing but its own imaginations ?

Lay aside, Sir, your peevish and stubborn abhorrence of our Images : Images, in a manner, fix what's so hard to be settled, the Mind. Besides, as nothing is more natural to man than imitation ; so, of all imitations, none is so lawful as that of a Picture, that represents to us what we ought to worship. The idea of virtuous persons, creates in us a love of their Virtues, and excites within us a just desire to attain that perfection which they arrived to. There are emulations of sanctity, as well as jealousies of glory : and if a Picture of ALEXANDER animated the ambition of CESAR with desire of conquering the World ; the Images of our Saints may surely kindle in us the ardour of their zeal, and inspire us with that happy violence that ravishes Heaven.

Every one knows, that NUMA prohibited all manner of Images in the Temples of the Romans, and his law was religiously observ'd for a good while : but it was afterwards thought fit to return to Nature, which can hardly forbear the representation of Objects, when the Objects themselves are absent ; and the Writings of that Legislator having, by chance, been found in his sepulchre, it was judg'd more proper to burn them, than to take them up again, with the dryness of his first Institutions. The Fathers of the Church have attack'd nothing so fiercely among the Heathens, as figures and images ; which they called *Gods of wood and stone, painted Deities, vain contrivances of fancy, impious handy-works of men.* 'Tis true, that Heathenism was scarce suppress'd, and Christian Religion settled, when the use of representations, tho formerly so much exclaim'd against, was resumed, and a great Council which was held some time after, order'd them to be reverenc'd².

I own that the *Old Testament* did not allow the forming any thing that look'd like the resemblance of God. The almighty Being had drawn himself in the great work of the Universe. The Heavens, the Sun, the Stars, the Elements, were the images of his immensity and power ; the wonderful Order of Nature, express'd his wisdom to us : our Understanding, which is desirous to know every thing, found in it self a kind of idea of his infinite intelligence ; and this was all that could be imagin'd of a GOD, who discover'd himself to Men no other way but by his works. But the case is alter'd under the dispensation of the *New Testament*. Since God made himself Man for our redemption, we may lawfully make to our selves Images of him,

Vol. II. S. whereby

² The second Council of Nice, held in the year 787, by the Intrigues of the Empress Irene.

whereby we may be exalted to acknowledge his goodness and love. And indeed, if they were condemned as *Hereticks* who deny'd his Humanity, is it not a strange absurdity to call us *Idolaters*, for loving to see it represented? We are commanded ever to have his Passion in our thoughts, always to meditate on his Sufferings; and yet some, it seems, would make it criminal for us, the having of Images that keep up the remembrance of them. They would have the image of his Death to be ever present to our mind, and yet will not allow any before our eyes.

Your aversion for the Ornaments of our Priests, and of our Churches, has no better foundation. You know, Sir, that G O D himself condescended to ordain even the Fringe that belonged to the habit of the High-Priest. Our Pontifical Habits come far short of those used in the Jewish œconomy; and you would hardly forgive our Bishops, should they officiate at Mass with the fine ornaments of a *Breast-plate* and *little Bells*. As for the pomp of our Churches, you have reason to call it vain, if you compare it to the solid magnificence of the Temple of S O L O M O N, in which Gold and Silver might have been used instead of Stone, towards the rearing up of that sumptuous structure. Nor is your austerity less wild in the silencing our Musick, than in condemning our Images. You ought to remember that D A V I D recommended nothing so earnestly to the Jews, as the celebrating of the Praises of the Almighty with all sorts of instruments. Musick in Churches exalts the Soul, purifies the Mind, moves the Heart, inspires and raises Devotion.

When a Mystery or a Miracle comes in question, you will admit of nothing but Sense and Reason: but in natural things, that conduce to Devotion, Sense and Reason are your enemies. There you ascribe

ascribe all to Nature, here to Grace ; there we can alledge nothing supernatural but you laugh at it : here we offer nothing human to you, but you think it profane and impious.

Divisions and Controversies have disturbed the peace of mankind but too long. Agree with us about Ceremonies lawfully establish'd, and we will join with you in exclaiming against Abuses that have crept in. As for instance, against base interest, sordid gain, and snares laid either for the weakness of women, or the simplicity of superstitious and credulous men. Let them endeavour to grow pure, who are reproach'd with Corruption ; let them who have the vanity to think themselves pure, bear with small insensible alterations, to which human nature is led by necessity. Let not, on the one hand, a Roman Catholick be destroy'd as an *Idolater* ; nor, on the other, a Protestant burnt as a *Heretick*. Nothing is more reasonable, than for a man to adore what he believes to be GOD ; nor any thing less criminal, than not to adore what he looks upon to be a bare SIGN ; and I cannot imagine how this different way of believing could be the occasion of so much barbarity, in a Religion altogether founded upon Love and Charity. If these are the effects of zeal, I'd fain know what those of fury and madness can be ?

One part of the Fathers has stuck to the literal sense of these words, *This is my Body* ; the other has taken them in a figurative sense, in a Country where almost every thing was spoken in figures. The truth of what I say is most evidently prov'd by the Books of M. ARNAULD, and M. CLAUDE, wherein, as soon as M. ARNAULD brings in a passage out of any of the Fathers, all the wit and dexterity of M. CLAUDE are scarce able to evade it ; and when the latter instances in another that favours his Opinion, all the force and vehemence

of M. ARNAULD cannot overthrow the argument of M. CLAUDE. This diversity of opinion is manifest among the Fathers; and 'tis but having either a moderate penetration, to be sensible of it, or a little sincerity to own it. Nevertheless, Sir, this difference did not break the communion of the Church; and all those Fathers went religiously together to receive the blessings that are promis'd us in that Sacrament.

You'll say, that 'tis difficult to agree with us upon the *existence of a Body without either Form or Extension*: but is it an easy matter to take up with *your spiritual eating it*; with that *Faith which really eats the Substance of this same Body*? The difficulty is great on both sides; and a miracle is necessary to support your Opinion, as well as ours. Therefore suffer us to enjoy the belief of an unconceivable Mystery, and we will allow you the strange medley of Faith and Reason, which cannot be either explain'd by you, or comprehended by others. Let every one stick to his own Doctrine as he thinks fit; but let us agree in the use of the Sacrament. This was the practice of the Fathers; why should not we follow their example now-a-days?

The article of *Adoration* ought not to be an obstacle to it; since true *Adoration* is an inward act, dependent on you: and without the intention of your mind, and the motion of your heart, for all your kneeling down, you adore nothing. If kneeling down were worshipping, Children would be Idolaters in England, for asking blessing of their Parents. In like manner a Lover who falls at his Mistress's feet, would perform an act of Idolatry; and the Spaniards, whose bows are a kind of kneeling down, would at least be profane. 'Tis thro' a refining upon your Notions, that Quakers pull off their hats neither to Princes nor Magistrates, upon an apprehension of communicating to a Creature
the

the honour which is only due to the Creator. It is strange, that your Ministers who make open war against Superstition, should themselves run into a practice more superstitious, than that which they ascribe to the most ignorant Roman Catholicks. For not to pay a due honour, thro' an ill grounded scruple of religion, is more inexcusable, than to over-do it, thro' mistaken zeal.

Had I been in the place of the Reformed in France, I would have receiv'd the Bishop of Com's ³ Book with all the favour imaginable; and having return'd that Prelate thanks for his insinuating overtures, I would have begg'd of him to have furnish'd me with a Catholick Religion purg'd from errors, and agreeable to his *Exposition of the Catholick Faith*. I confess he would not have found it in Italy, Spain, or Portugal: but he might have procur'd it to you in France, free from the Superstitions of the multitude, and the inspirations of foreigners; regulated with equal wisdom and piety by our Laws; and maintain'd with resolution by our Parliaments. In such a case, if you apprehend the power of the Pope, the Liberties of the Gallican Church will skreen you against it: there His Holiness will neither be infallible, nor sovereign umpire of your faith: he will neither dispose of the Dominions of Princes, nor of the Kingdoms of Heaven at his pleasure: in such a case, if you become Roman, so far as, with lawful submission, to respect his Character and Dignity, it will be sufficient for you to be a Frenchman, not to dread his Jurisdiction.

But if the love of Separation still possesses you, and you cannot in the least discharge your self from the Opinions that are grown habitual with you, do not complain of what is taken from you, as an injustice,

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³ James Benigne Bossuet, afterwards Bishop of Meaux.

justice, but rather be thankful for what is left you, as a favour. Sullenness, murmuring, and opposition, will rather hurt than serve your Party: whereas a more respectful behaviour, and a management of your interest with more discretion than violence, might prevent the design of your ruin, if any such thing were resolv'd on. Controversies do but exasperate those in power: and things are now at such a pass, that you have more need of discreet Leaders, than good Writers to preserve you. Your Fore-fathers employ'd all their talents and industry to have Privileges granted them; now your skill must be employ'd to prevent their being taken away from you. The first Settlement of the Protestants was owing to Daringness, Vigour, and Resolution: but nothing now can maintain you, but Affection, Loyalty, and Submission; and such as would be destroy'd as Rebels, may be suffered as dutiful Subjects. In short, Sir, if your Religion be peaceable and quiet, in which you have nothing but your salvation in view, it is to be hoped that her modest and pious exercises will not be disturb'd, But if, jealous and quarrellous, she attacks the establish'd Religion, and censures and condemns the most innocent things, I will not be answerable for a long indulgence towards the indiscretion of a stranger, both unjust and peevish in her corrections.

One of the chief points of discretion, and the most recommended, is, in all Countries to reverence the Religion of the Prince: to condemn the Religion of the Sovereign, is to condemn the Sovereign himself at the same time. An English Roman Catholic, who in his discourse or writings calls the Church of England *Heretical*, treats the King of England as an *Heretick*, and insults him in his own dominions. Likewise, a Protestant in France, who charges the Catholick Religion with *Idolatry*, does by a necessary consequence accuse the King of being

ing an *Idolater* : which the Heathen Emperors themselves could not bear. I think nothing is more unjust, than to persecute a man for his belief ; but nothing appears more foolish to me, than for a man to draw persecution upon himself.

Be rul'd by me, Sir, and peaceably enjoy whatever exercise you may be allow'd ; and be persuaded that Princes have as much right to the external of Religion, as Subjects have over the inward recesses of their Consciences.

If you duly consider this truth, you will not account an injury the pulling down a Protestant Church in Languedoc : but reckon it as a favour that that of Charenton stands. The fury of opinions, and the obstinacy of parties, are not for a wise man like your self : your honour and zeal are set above all manner of reflection, by what you have already suffered ; and you could not do better, than to go and fix at Paris a wandring and stroling Religion, which you have dragg'd long enough from Country to Country. I know very well, that considering the humour you are in at present, it would be labour lost to exhort you to renounce it altogether : an Opinion that becomes as it were natural, by being form'd of the first impressions receiv'd in our infancy ; the fondness a man has for antient Customs ; the difficulty he finds to quit a Belief he was bred in, to embrace another which he always oppos'd ; a niceness of honour, and a mistaken notion of constancy, are chains which you will not break easily : but then leave your Children that free choice, which your old engagements will not suffer you to enjoy. You complain of the Edict, which obliges them to chuse a Religion at seven years of age ; and this, in my opinion, is the greatest favour that could be done them : for thereby they are restor'd to their Country, which you robb'd them of ; they are re-instated in the bosom of the Commonwealth, from

whence you drew them, and they resume their birthrights to Honours and Dignities, from which you excluded them. Do not envy them, Sir, those advantages you have neglected; and keeping to your self your Opinions and Misfortunes, leave Providence to take care of their Religion and fortune.

What father does not endeavour to possess his children with a zeal for his Party, as well as his Religion? And how can any man tell what will be the result of this zeal, whether it will turn to fury or piety? whether it will produce crimes or virtues? In this uncertainty, Sir, resign all to the disposal of a Law, which has no other end than the publick good, and the particular advantages of your families. And indeed, is it not better to receive one's Religion from the Laws of one's Country, than either from the liberty of one's fancy, or the animosity of a faction a man happens to be engag'd in, than to make it the first article of Faith, to hate the *Papists*, as you unjustly call us? Be wise and discreet, tho the passionate should call you lukewarm for it; it becomes you to spend in peace the remainder of your days. God Almighty will reward you for your patience; for he loves the wisdom he inspires, but cannot endure indiscreet zeal, which either occasions, or foolishly draws a man into trouble.



THOUGHTS,



THOUGHTS,
REFLECTIONS,

AND

MAXIMS.

Upon Health.

I.

IF you have any regard for the niceness of your Palate, or concern for your Health, you will eat none but plain Meat, without any mixture, but exquisite by its natural goodness, and the curiosity of your choice.

II.

Let all strong Soups, Gravy-sauce, Ragoos, Kick-shaws, and generally all made dishes, be banish'd your table, to prevent Distempers unknown heretofore, during the simplicity of meals.

III.

Variety of Wines may, sometimes, be agreeable; never wholesom: be temperate, and nice; drink
but

but little wine, but excellent ; and keep to the same as long as possible.

IV.

Champagne Wines are the best ; don't keep too long those of Ay ; neither drink too soon those of Rheims. Cold preserves the spirits of River-Wines ; heat takes away the taste of the foil of Mountain-Wines.

V.

You can't be too careful of your Diet, nor too cautious against Physick. A moderate diet entertains health and pleasure ; Physick is an ill present, in view of an uncertain good to come.

VI.

Pleasures and Diet ought to be in a kind of concert, and bear a just proportion to one another. Immoderate pleasures put Nature into disorder ; but then a sparing and dry way of living dulls the spirits, and insensibly extinguishes them.

Upon Love.

VII.

Let us have a sufficient stock of Love to animate us ; but not enough to disturb our repose. The heart was given us to love, which is an agreeable motion ; not to suffer, which is a painful sensation.

VIII.

'Tis against the intention of Nature, to make that our torment, which she design'd for our pleasure and comfort.

IX.

IX.

Voluptuous Women are less sensible of the motions of their Hearts, than of the impulse of their lewd Appetites: the finical or precise, to preserve the purity of their hearts, tenderly love their Gallants, without enjoyment; and solidly enjoy their Husbands, whom they hate.

Upon Devotion.

X.

Amorous Ladies, who give up themselves to God, generally make him no other present, than of an empty idle Soul that seeks to employ it self; so that their Devotion may be call'd a new passion, wherein a tender heart, that thinks to be penitent, does only change the object of its love.

XI.

When we begin to turn devout, it is easier for us to love God, than to serve him well. The reason of it is, because we still retain a heart used to Love; and a soul that had a great familiarity with Vice. The heart finds nothing new in its motions: but a disorderly soul finds a great alteration in the sentiments of Virtue; so that whatever change there may appear to be, a man is still the same; he loves as he loved: and is unjust, proud, revengeful, and selfish as he was before,

XII,

True Devotion is reasonable, kind, and beneficent: the more it ties us to God, the more it inclines us to live well with Men,

XIII,

XIII.

The Life of Monks is still the same, as to the Rules of their Order : but unequal thro' the inequality of the temper their minds are in.

XIV.

In a religious House, Doubt over-rules some hours, and Persuasion some others : there are times when a man regrets the pleasures he has lost ; and times when he laments the sins he has committed,

On Death.

XV.

The best reason one has to resolve to die, is, because he cannot help it. Philosophy gives us force to dissemble the sense of Death, but does not remove it : Religion makes us more fearful and less confident.

XVI.

All things duly weigh'd and consider'd, Wisdom rather consists in making us live easy and quiet, than in making us die with constancy.

XVII.

Philosophical Deaths afford excellent matter of discourse to the Living, but little comfort to the Dying :

*Expecting our severe and common fate,
Let us love Life, but not fear Death.*



A

LETTER

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN,

On her design of retiring into a Convent.

I Know not, Madam, whether the title of *Friendship without Friendship*, which you have bestowed on my Writing¹, is proper for it; but I'm sure it suits but ill with my sentiments, those particularly which you excite in me. Since that unlucky evening in which you acquainted me with the fatal Resolution you seem willing to take, I had not one moment's repose; or rather you have cast me into continual pain, which is something more violent than a bare privation of rest.

How is it possible for you to leave persons who are charm'd with you, and who adore you; friends that love you more than they love themselves, to go and hunt after unknown people you will not like, and who perhaps will insult you? Do you consider, Madam, that you are going to throw your self into a Convent, which the Constable's
Lady*,

* See above, pag. 261.

Lady^a, your sister, abhorr'd? If she returns thither, 'tis because she must either chuse that, or Death; whereas, in order to go to it, you will leave a Court where you are esteemed; where the affection of a gracious and good-natur'd King affords you a kind treatment; where all sensible and judicious persons have both a respect and friendship for you. Think well upon it, Madam: The most happy day you will pass in a Nunnery, will not be worth the most melancholy you pass here at home.

Indeed, if you were touch'd, and acted by a particular impulse of divine Grace, that should prompt you to devote your self to God's service, the hardship of your Condition might be excused by the ardour of your Zeal, which would render every thing supportable to you: but you are neither convinc'd, nor affected; and you must even learn to believe in him, whom you are going to serve so austere. You will not only meet with all the hardships that Nuns undergo, but will miss the Spouse that comforts them. To you every sort of spouse is odious; not only such a one as is to be found abroad in the world, but even such a one as is to be found in a Monastery. The being one day in doubt about the happiness of another life, is sufficient to cast into despair the chastest maid in a Nunnery: for Faith alone strengthens and supports her, and enables her to bear the mortifications she undergoes. Who knows, Madam, whether you will believe one quarter of an hour what she must ever believe to avoid being unhappy? Who knows, whether the idea of a promis'd Felicity will ever be powerful enough to bear you up against the sense of present ills?

Nothing is more reasonable to such as are sincerely convinced, than to live under that austerity which

^a *Marie Mancini, one of the Dutches of Mazarin's sisters, who was married to Prince Colonna, Constable of the Kingdom of Naples.*

which they believe necessary for their arrival at the fruition of eternal bliss; and nothing is more just in them who are not convinced, than to indulge their ease here below, and to taste with moderation every pleasure for which they have any relish. For this reason, those among the Philosophers who believ'd the Immortality of the Soul, made no account of the delights of this world; and such of them who after this life expected no other, have placed their sovereign Good in pleasure. You, Madam, profess a Philosophy entirely new: in opposition to EPICURUS to pursue Pain, Mortifications, and Anguish; and in opposition to SOCRATES, you expect no reward from Virtue. Without much Religion you are going to profess a religious Life: you despise this World, and don't set much value upon the other. Unless therefore you have found out a third World created purposely for you, there is no way left to justify your conduct.

We must, Madam, we must be convinced before we lay a restraint upon ourselves: we must not suffer without knowing for whom we suffer. In a word, we must earnestly endeavour to know God, before we deny ourselves. 'Tis in the midst of the Universe where the contemplation of the wonders of Nature will lead you to his knowledge on whom it depends. The sight of the Sun will make you comprehend the greatness and magnificence of him that form'd it; that wonderful and just Order, which cements and entertains all things, will bring you acquainted with his Wisdom. In short, Madam, in this World, which you design to leave, God lies all open and ready explain'd to our thoughts; whereas he lies so close in Monasteries, that he rather conceals than manifests himself; and is so disguis'd by the mean and unworthy forms under which he is represented, that the most enlighten'd

enlighten'd have much ado to know him. However, an old Abbess will continually speak to you about him, whom, of all things, she has the least knowledge of: she'll command you to do some silly things by way of Penance; and an exact obedience must answer the command, let it be never so ridiculous. Your ghostly Father will assume no less an ascendant over you: and your Reason thus humbled, will find itself a slave to presumptuous ignorance. Reason, that secret character or image of God, which he has imprinted on our souls, will represent you as a rebel, if you do not reverence in this Director of your Conscience, the imbecillity of human nature. Too simple and credulous Nuns will disgust you, and you'll be offended at the libertine and the wanton. You will find there the crimes of the world, whose pleasures you have forsaken.

Hitherto you have liv'd in grandeur, and enjoy'd all the delights that attend it. You were brought up as a Queen, and you deserv'd to be one. Being the Heiress of a Minister who govern'd the Universe, you brought a greater fortune to your Husband, than all the Queens of EUROPE together, to their Royal Consorts. One day robb'd you of all that vast estate: but your merit supply'd the loss of your fortune, and made you live with more magnificence in foreign countries, than you would have lived in ours. Curiosity, delicacy, cleanliness, nice dress, conveniencies of life, and pleasures have not abandon'd you. If your discretion has forbidden you voluptuous enjoyments, you have yet this advantage, that no favours were ever so desired as yours.

Now, Madam, what will you find in a Nunnery? a severe prohibition of all that nature reasonably requires; of all that humanity allows: a cell, a hard bed, more detestable diet, nasty stinking
cloaths,

cloaths, shall make up all your delights. You'll be your sole attendant, the only person to humour and please you, amidst so many things that will displease you; nor will you, perhaps, be in a condition to have for your self the most secret complaisance for self-love; perhaps your Beauty, being become altogether useless, will not discover it self, either to your own eyes, or those of others.

However, Madam, this wonderful Beauty of yours, this great ornament of the Universe, was not bestow'd upon you to be hid. You owe your self to the publick, to your friends, to your self. You were made to please your self, to please all; to dissipate sorrow, to inspire joy, to revive in general all that languishes. When the ugly and the foolish throw themselves into Nunneries, 'tis a divine inspiration that makes them quit the world, where they can but disgrace its author: but in you, Madam, 'tis a downright temptation from the Devil, who envying God's Glory, cannot bear the admiration, which the most excellent of his Works raises in us. Twenty whole years spent in singing of Psalms, and Anthems in the Choir, will not contribute so much to that Glory, as will one day in which your Beauty lies expos'd to the sight of the world. The shewing your self is your true Vocation: 'tis the service you owe God; 'tis the most suitable worship you can pay him. If time has power to destroy the excellent harmony and proportion of your features, as well as those of others; if it should one day ruin that Beauty we now admire: then indeed, you may retire from the world; and after having fulfill'd the will of him that form'd you, go, and sing his praises in a Nunnery. But, be sure to follow the disposition he has made of your life; for if you forestal the hour he has ap-

pointed for your Retreat, you shall betray his intentions, by a secret complaisance for his enemy.

If you hearken to this enemy, one of your greatest misfortunes will be, that no body shall be necessary to them but your self. My Lady COLONNA, your sister, charges hers on the violences that are offer'd her. She has the cruelty of a Husband that compels her, the injustice of a Court that supports him, and a thousand other grievances, either true or false, to complain of. But you, Madam, are the only cause of your hard fate, and can accuse none but your own error. God makes his will known to you thro' my mouth, and you will not give me the hearing. He makes use of my arguments to save you, and you consult nothing but your ruin. One day, over-whelm'd with all the miseries I describe to you, you will, but too late, think on him who endeavour'd to prevent them.

You are flatter'd, perhaps, by the noise your Retreat will make; and by an extravagant Vanity you think nothing is more illustrious, than to rob the world of the greatest Beauty that ever was in it, when others bestow nothing on God, but either natural Deformity, or the ruins of a worn-out Face. But how long have you preferr'd the emptiness of opinion before the reality of things? And who, after all, will warrant you that your Resolution will not be accounted as foolish as extraordinary? Who can tell, but it will be look'd upon as the return of a wandering and travelling humour? Or, that people will imagine that you go three hundred leagues in quest of an Adventure, divine indeed, if you please to call it so, but still an Adventure.

You hope, to find some comfort in my Lady COLONNA's Conversation: but, if I am not mistaken, that comfort will not last long. After you have talk'd three or four days of France and Italy,

of the King's passion, and the timorousness of the Cardinal your Uncle³; of what you are like to be, and what you are at present; after having exhausted your memory of what pass'd at the Constable's House, of your going out of Rome, and of your unfortunate Voyages and Travels, you will find your self coop'd up in a Convent; and your Captivity, the hardship of which you will by that time begin to feel, will make you reflect on the sweet Liberty you enjoy'd in England. Those very things that now seem tiresome to you, will appear charming to your Imagination; and what you have quitted thro' disgust, will revive, and tantalize your appetite. Then, Madam, then, what force of mind must you be mistress of, to comfort your self under the sense of present ills, and lost pleasures?

I grant, my guesses may prove false, and my conjectures ill-grounded. I grant, my Lady COLONNA's Conversation may ever be agreeable to you: but who will warrant that it will be in your power freely to enjoy it? 'Tis one of the Rules observ'd in religious Houses, not to permit any close correspondence between persons that take delight in each other's company; because the union of private persons is a kind of breach of the obligations one has contracted with the whole society. Besides, the Constable's care and vigilance may extend so far, as to prevent a communication, that will raise a thousand chimerical fears in the head of a suspicious man, who has too much offended. I do not mention the caprice and freaks of an Abbess, nor the secret jealousies of Nuns, who will do all the spite they can, to a person

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whose

³ *The King of France, before he married the Infanta of Spain, was passionately in love with my Lady Colonna, (then a Maid); but Cardinal Mazarin, her Uncle, would not consent to that Match, for fear the same should be resented by the Princes of the Blood, and Nobility of France.*

whose merit will drown theirs. Thus, Madam, it may be your fate, that after you have turn'd Nun, and live with your sister, you will be scarce allow'd to see her; and so you will either be alone with your melancholy thoughts, or in a crowd, amidst impertinence, error, and folly; tired with Sermons in a language you little understand, fatigu'd with Matins that will disturb your morning-rest, wearied with the continual habit of saying Vespers, and the troublesom mumbling of a Rosary.

What shall I do then, will you say? preserve your Reason, Madam; for you'll make your self unhappy if you lose it. What a prodigious loss is the want of that exquisite discernment and sound judgment you were mistress of? Have you committed so great a crime against your self, thus to inflict so severe a punishment on your own person? And then what reason have you to complain of your friends, thus to exercise so cruel a revenge upon them? The Italians murder their enemies; but their friends escape their savage way of doing themselves justice.

Madam DE BEVERWEERT and I, have already received mortal strokes; the very thought of your sufferings, has occasion'd ours; and I find my self at present the most miserable of Men, because you are going to make your self the most miserable of all Women. When I go to see her in the morning, we look upon each other speechless, for a quarter of an hour; and this mournful silence, is ever attended with our tears. Take pity on us, Madam, if you'll have none for your self. One may go so far as to deprive one's self, of the conveniencies of life, for the sake of friends: we only desire you to forbear its torments, and shan't we obtain our request? You must needs be naturally very hard-hearted, since you are the first that feels

the effects, of your own rigour. Think, Madam, think seriously, on what I tell you : you stand upon the brink of ruin : one step forward, and you are undone ; one step backward, and you are safe. Your good, or bad Fortune, is in your own hands : have but the courage to be happy, and you will infallibly be so.

If you leave the World, as you seem resolv'd, my comfort is, that I shall not stay long in it : Nature, kinder than you, will soon put a period to my melancholy life. In the mean time, Madam, your commands will supercede hers, when you please ; for the right she has over me, is subordinate, to that I have resigned to you. There's no Voyage I shall not undertake to be in your company ; and if you shall strain your rigour so far, as even to deny me that favour, I shall go and hide my self in some desert, being utterly incapable to relish any Conversation but yours. In that Solitude, your image will supply all other objects ; there I shall disengage me from, and forget my self, if I may so speak, that I may eternally think on you. There I shall learn to die ; and my last Sighs, will acquaint the whole world, with the power of your charms, and merits, and the depth of my affliction.





TO THE SAME:

On the Death of her Lover'.

I WAS told you were going to leave England, and tho yet uncertain where to fix your Residence, that you were resolved to go out of the Country, where you ought to stay. In the name of wonder, Madam, what do you mean? what are you going to do? You will give your enemies invincible reasons against your self, and deprive your friends of all means to serve you. You will, by this new ramble, revive the dormant fault of all the former; and ruin all your present and future interest. But, say you, can one appear in publick, after this strange unlucky adventure? But, answer I, how can one hide one's self without making a bare misfortune a crime. 'Tis certain our ill conduct often turns misfortunes into faults; and I am afraid, Madam, you will find it by experience. If you continue any longer in your obscure retreat, every one will reproach you, with what you seem to reproach your self; and you'll be condemn'd by thousands, who are now disposed to pity you.

But after all, Madam, is the accident that has befallen you, so very extraordinary? I could name to you some modern Beauties, who have born the loss of their Lovers with very moderate sorrow, but that I have a greater example in store for you.

HELENA,

¹ Baron Banier, who was killed in a Duel by Prince Philip of Savoy. See the Life of Monsieur de St. Eyremond, in the year 1683.

HELENA, less beautiful than you, but next to you, the most beautiful woman the world ever saw; HELENA, caused both Gods and Men to fight ten years together, and was more proud of what others did for her sake, than ashamed of what she had done herself. These, Madam, are the Heroins, you ought to imitate; and not the DIDO's and THISBE's; those wretches who have disgraced Love by the desperate extravagance of their passion. But what mean you by your sorrow? To lament a dead man, is not to lament a Lover. Your Lover is now no more than a sad and empty Object, form'd by your imagination: 'tis to be in love with your own idea; and the Lady who is in love with ALEXANDER the Great*, is as excusable in her chimerical passion, as you are in yours; since a man who died to day, has no more to do with this world, than that famous conqueror. Therefore your self are the subject matter of your tears; whilst being too faithful to your affliction, you vainly endeavour to restore what Nature has destroy'd.

*Then talk of his disastrous fate no more;
A grief, which on your Beauty preys, give o'er:
The man you mourn for, is for ever gone,
And you're alone the subject of your moan.
Your raving fancy, to your self unkind,
Has form'd a Fantom to distract your mind.*

I give you the best Arguments in the world, both in Prose and Verse: but the more pains I take to comfort you, the more I find you inconsolable. Since the times of ARTEMISIA, and the Dutch-

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* See the French Play, called Les Visionnaires, writ by Des Marets.

els of MONTMORENCI, both famous for their solemn affliction, and celebrated by the Mausoleums they erected for their Husbands, no sorrow like yours was ever seen. 'Tis true, it was, in a manner, enjoyn'd to you by the Directress of your grief³. No moment passes, but DOLORIDA⁴ approaches your ears to tell you news of the other world; and there's no secret she leaves untry'd, to entertain in your soul the love of the dead, and the hatred of the living. Sometimes she makes use of a sad and mournful countenance; sometimes of a woful story, and sometimes, for variety-sake, of a melancholy and lamentable song. And those very Hymns which the Church has instituted to celebrate the death of our Saviour, are mournfully sung at his nativity, when the same Church ordains us to rejoice.

If one should observe in you the least sign of your being restor'd to your gay humour; if, by an impulse of nature, you should break out into the least fall of joy, contrary to DOLORIDA's orders, a severe look of hers makes you immediately return to the duty of your sorrow: and such art of grieving and lamenting is employ'd to give you a disgust to the world; that if the same melancholy methods, and gloomy application were to be used with Mr. TALBOT, I don't in the least doubt that in a fortnight one might make a good Hermit of the most jovial of all men. Let therefore no body wonder at DOLORIDA's successful machines of a studied desolation: the wonder is, you have preserved so much judgment as you have done. You have enough left, Madam, in spite of all the endeavours that have been used to rob you of it entirely,

³ *Madam de Ruz, whom the Duke of Mazarin had sent to London with some young devout Ladies, in order to engage his Dutches's to retire into a Nunnery.*

⁴ See Don Quixot, Part II. Chap. 36. &c.

tirely, in order to dispose of you with more ease to your ruin: but nevertheless, do not take it ill of me, if I shew you the difference there is between you and your self.

What would formerly have said that Dutcheſs of MAZARIN, whom we knew full of wit, and penetration; what would our Madam MAZARIN have said, if she had seen a small religious Flock cross the Sea, to settle their wandring Sanctity in the House of a person of Quality? And what would she not have said of the hospitable Lady, who would have entertain'd these pious Sisters? What would Madam MAZARIN have said, if she had seen the reverend Mother superior, divide her time, between the exercises of piety, and her amorous lectures; between the fervency of prayers, and the eagerness of getting a guinea; between the pious frauds of Religion, and the cheats at Basset? What would she have said, if she had seen those young plants, that wanted moisture, bear miraculously forward fruit, thro' the particular blessing of that house? Come on, little MAROTE^s, you profelyte of their holinesses, come and learn us something of the mystery, in which you have been initiated: shew your self, MAROTE, and convince the publick of the efficacy of their wholesom instructions. The thing is too serious, and too pressing, to make a jest of it any longer.

In the name of God, Madam; that name which is abused by the Hypocrites, who in the judgment of my Lord BACON, are the great Atheists: in the name of God, rid your self of a contagious commerce with wickedness and folly. You will no sooner have freed your self from it, but you'll recover all your former judgment, and retrieve
your

^s One of the young Girls that came over with Madam de Ruz, and who bore the forward fruit.

your pristine Reputation. Consult solidly your interest, and wisely your repose. This is all I beg of you: make your self happy, and you'll do more for me than 'twere in your power to do for a Lover, let your favours be never so precious.

TO THE SAME:

On her design of leaving England.

I DO my self the honour to write to you, Madam; not that I flatter my self with the hope of regaining your favour; but only to have the satisfaction to tell you the greatest truth in the world; which is, Madam, that you never had, nor never will have, so faithful a servant as I have been, and will ever be. 'Tis true, this fidelity of mine had nothing in view, but your interest. Leaving for others, to humour your fancies, the complaisance they have at present to entertain your sorrows, I consider'd what was conducing to your good, and oppos'd what unfortunately pleas'd you to your ruin. After so just an assurance of my zeal, I will tell you, that you have nothing to fear in England, but those who endeavour to give you a disgust of it: and would to God you were as truly perswaded of the civility of the English, as they are ready to give you proofs of it on all occasions. Shew your self, Madam: for you never can hurt your self so much, as by hiding your self. But when you become accessible, give us leave to come to you any other way, but that cursed Apartment¹, fitter to
conjure

¹ See the Life of M. de St. Evremond, under the year 1683.

conjure up the Ghost of SAMUEL, than to lead to Madam MAZARIN's Chamber. If all those dismal preparations are of ARCA BONE'S² providing, we pray God to preserve us against the enchantment. But if that black melancholy proceeds from your own humour; if you think on nothing but to hurt and torment your self; learn, Madam, that the greatest cruelty is to torment ones self. Who does not forgive himself, deserves not to be forgiven by others: for he teaches them to be severe and unrelenting. Let us come to the point; for I begin to be weary of generalities.

Suppose your Nephew³ should lose his Benefices; I don't deny but it is matter of grief: but you have sustained greater losses without breaking your heart for it. A man who profess'd love to you, has been kill'd. 'Tis an unfortunate accident, I own it: but, bating your affliction, there's nothing very extraordinary in this adventure. Lovers are mortal, like other men. If you can make Love to be an exemption from dying, the Ladies will be pester'd with Lovers; and there will be as many as there are Men. I know 'tis decent to mourn for the loss of those that love us; but to summon all that is direful to the assistance of our grief, and take thereupon destructive resolutions, is what the Dead do not require from us.

Give me leave to reproach you with something that's mean, but which is necessary to animate you to shake off the concernment you are in. In times of prosperity, I know, no body shews more Philosophy than you. You talk more gravely than PLUTARCH; you speak more Sentences than SENECA; you make more Reflections than MONT-

TAIGNE;

² A famous Enchantress, Sister to the Magician Arcalaus, in the Romance called Amadis de Gaul.

³ Prince Philip of Savoy. See the Life of M. de St. Evremond, under the year 1683.

TAIGNE: but upon the least accident, upon the least trouble that befalls you, you are bewilder'd, and lost to all counsel; you renounce your own reason, and resign your self to those who have none, or whose interest lies in your ruin. 'Tis too much, Madam, 'tis too much in all conscience to act the same Farce twice in one family. And why, I pray, did you wonder so much at my Lady COLONNA's leaving Turin, where she had nothing but the dry and bare protection of the Duke of Savoy? Why, I say, did you so much wonder at it, if you can now be capable of leaving the King of England, as secure by his power, as solid by his beneficence?

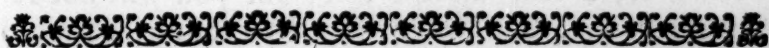
Notwithstanding all these clear and forcible arguments, I am still afraid lest you over-look your Interest; unfortunate, not to see in England what suits best with you; yet more unfortunate in seeing it too well as soon as you are gone out of England! You shall then recover the light when you want means to enjoy it. As long as you are in this Kingdom, either in Town or Country, you may mend your affairs, as bad a condition as they are in; but after you are once on board the Ship, here's no more resource. You must go to places where you'll find neither satisfaction nor interest; where your imaginations will be frustrated; and where, to torment you, you will find the sense of present misery, and the remembrance of past felicity.

I know, Madam, you don't care to hear of Examples. But without regarding your aversion, I shall make bold to tell you, that the Queen of BOHEMIA⁴, upon her going out of England, dragg'd about a wandering necessity from one Nation to another; and that MARY of MEDICIS, Mother, or Mother-in-law to three great Kings⁵,
went

⁴ Elizabeth Stuart, Daughter to King James I.

⁵ Mary of Medicis, was Mother to Lewis XIII. and Mother-in-law to Philip IV. King of Spain, and Charles I. King of England.

went to starve at Cologne. I look upon you, Madam, with tears in my eyes, as a person ready to be sacrificed, unless you have the force to save your self from the Altar. Do as much for your self as RACINE did for IPHIGENIA: put an ERIPHILE in your place, and come and comfort men of honour with your safety, and her ruin.



TO THE SAME:

On the same Subject.

YOU doubt not, Madam, that I am sensibly touch'd to see you leave England; but I should be inconsolable, if you design'd to go and live either with the Princes of Germany, or the Grandees of Spain. Nothing is more natural for you, than living in France. For my own part, I would not desire either a better Air, or a finer Country. England, however, has its conveniences: a great many Guineas, with the liberty of enjoying them as one thinks fit.

I cannot go on with this sort of discourse. All diversions are necessary to amuse my sorrow; but it is very difficult to make use of any, when it comes into my thoughts that I shall never see you again. I look upon you as a dead Person, with respect to me. All your good Qualities appear before me to affect me; and I can fix my eye on no imperfection that can comfort me. Would to God you had left me some reason to complain, more provoking than the abandoning me to my little merit. A just resentment of an injury would exasperate me against you;

you ; but your contempt obliges me to do my self an irksome piece of justice, without affording me any thing to reproach you with. Pray let this Letter serve for an Adieu : for I shall not have the strength to bid it by word of mouth ; and I shall weep in my Chamber, as I do already now, to spare my Age the shame of shedding Tears in publick. Remember now and then an old Servant. However, I fear what I ask : for you will not remember me, but when my Predictions come to pass ; and I had rather they should prove false, and be forgotten. As for you, Madam, you will ever be remember'd by those who had the honour to know you. Those you think the least disposed to regret you, will not forgive the resolution you have taken to leave us. Your only enemy is your self ; and your sad ideas, and melancholy attendants. If a man could look into your head, as well as on your face, he would find your brain blacken'd with the *Dead of La Trape*¹, and your other dismal Imaginations. Farewel, Madam. The bare mentioning your affliction, would make me sad, if I were not so already. Guess at my sorrow and zeal for your service : for 'tis not in my power to express it.

For a long while, I have not taken upon me to give you counsel. Let the last be, to reconcile your self with the Duke of MAZARIN, if you can do it with any safety. If there be none, return to England, to pass some time in the country. I am persuaded the King will not abandon you ; and you will find more people ready to serve you than you imagine. As for Monasteries, one lives wretchedly there, unless one becomes

¹ There is a Book of the Lives of some Persons that died at the Monastery of la Trape, and left behind them the reputation of being holy Men.

comes crazy. All things consider'd, 'tis better for a married woman to suffer with an Husband, than to suffer with an Abbess. There is more honour and virtue in it. Rid your self, as fast as you can, of the black whims that proceed from the spleen, and in which even your imagination has no share.



S O M E

O B S E R V A T I O N S

Upon the Taste and Judgment of the
F R E N C H.

ALtho the Genius of the French seems generally to be but mean, it is certain, that those who distinguish themselves amongst us, are capable of the most noble productions: but when they know how to perform them, we know not how to admire them; and if we have done justice to some excellent work, our levity doth not suffer it to enjoy long the reputation we have given it. I don't at all wonder, that there is no good Taste of things where barbarity reigns, and no judgment where Letters, Arts, and Discipline are lost; it would likewise be ridiculous to expect a vein of fine learning, in times of darkness and ignorance: but that which is really surprizing, is, to see in the most polite Court, a true and vicious palate succeed by turns, and become a-la-mode, like our cloaths.

I have known considerable men sometimes pass for the ornaments of the Court, and sometimes be thought ridiculous; to be liked again, then fall into contempt; without any alteration, either in their persons, or their conduct. A Man retires
with

with the applause of the whole world, who, the next day finds himself the subject of our raillery, without knowing how he came to forfeit the good opinion we had of him lately. The true reason is, because we rarely judge of Men by solid advantages, which good sense discovers; but by the fashion, whose applause ends as soon as the fancy which had produced it.

The Works of Authors are subject to the same inequality of our Taste. When I was young, THEOPHILE was admired, in spite of his irregularities and negligence, which made a shift to escape thro' want of a nice judgment in the Courtiers of that time. I have seen him since universally cried down by all the Versifiers, without any respect to his fine imagination, and the happy graces of his genius. I have known the time, when the Poetry of MALHERBE was thought admirable, for the turn, the exactness, and the expression. Not long after, he was thrown aside, as the worst of Poets; when riddles, burlesque, *bouts rimez*¹, carried all France before them. I have seen CORNEILLE lose his reputation, if it were possible for him to lose it, at the representation of one of his best Pieces². I have seen two of the best Comedians of the world³, exposed to all our raillery; and when the influence of this prejudice was over, they were as much admired as before. The Airs of BOISSET, which formerly so justly charmed all the Court, were soon left for little ballad-tunes; and LUGI, the first man of the universe in his art, must come from Italy to admire them, and make us repent of this our folly, and restore them to that reputation, which nothing but meer whimsy had robbed them of.

¹ A set of Rhimes given to a Poet in order to his filling them up in a Sonnet, or some other piece of Poetry.

² The Sophonisba.

³ Floridor and Montfleury.

of. If you ask me the reason of it, I must tell you, that industry in France supplies the place of the greatest merit, and that the art of making one's self valued, oftner gives us a reputation than our intrinsic value.

Since good Judges are as rare as good Authors; since 'tis as difficult to find judgment in one, as genius in the other, every one aims to give a reputation to that which pleases him; and it happens, that the multitude values that which is agreeable to their ill relish, or at most, to their indifferent understanding. Besides, Novelty is a temptation from which our minds cannot easily defend themselves. The Merit which we are accustom'd to, does not fail, in time, to raise our envy; and even defects are capable of surprizing us agreeably, in things that we never saw. The most valuable things, after they have appeared some time amongst us, no longer make an impression upon us as good; but disgust us as old: on the other side, things that deserve no esteem, are less often rejected as despicable, than desired as new.

Not but that we have men of sound judgment in France, who never dislike any thing that ought to please, and are never pleas'd with what is trifling: but the multitude, either ignorant, or prepossess'd, still prevails over the small numbers of the knowing. Beside, persons of the greatest figure set a value on every thing according to their fancy, and when a person follows the mode, he may equally esteem those things he knows, and those he doth not.

There is no Country where Reason or Sense is scarcer, than in France; but when 'tis found there, none is purer in the whole universe. For the most part indeed, we are govern'd by fancy; but a fancy so fine, and a caprice so noble, as to what regards the outside, that Foreigners, ashamed of their good

Sense, as of a gross quality, seek to make themselves esteemed at home, by imitating our Modes; and renounce essential qualities, to affect an air and manner, which 'tis hardly possible for them to attain. Thus that continual alteration in our cloths and household-goods, with which our neighbours reproach us, but always imitate, is without our so designing it, a wise and politick contrivance: for, besides, those infinite sums of Money it draws from foreign parts, 'tis an interest more solid than one would imagine, to have French-men dispersed in all places, who regulate the garb of other Nations by our own; who begin by enslaving their eyes, when their heart still opposes our Laws; and gain the senses to favour our Empire, when in their opinion they still hold out for Liberty.

So advantageous and happy to us, is this noble and fine fancy of ours, which makes it self be received by our greatest enemies. However, it ought not to usurp upon the Arts, nor pretend imperiously to pass sentence upon the productions of the mind, without consulting either a good Taste or Reason. When we are arrived to the perfection of any thing, we ought to shew our niceness by relishing, and our justice by always esteeming it: unless we observe this rule, we may with reason be reproached, that Foreigners are more favourable to the merit of our Works, than our selves. We shall find some of our good Pieces preserve their reputation abroad, when they have lost it in France: we'll see our fopperies elsewhere rejected by good Sense, when we extol them to the skies, out of a ridiculous folly.

There is a Vice opposite to this, which is equally insupportable; that is, our passionate affection for what was done in the former, and our dislike for every thing that's done in our own time. Upon this foundation H O R A C E drew the Character of

old Age; and an old Man is, indeed, admirably described by him,

Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti.

In this melancholy scene of Life, we impute the defects which proceed purely from our moroseness, to exterior Objects; and when a pleasant remembrance turns our thoughts from what we are, to what we have been, we attribute Charms to many things, which really had none, because they revive in our minds the idea of our Youth, when every thing pleased us by the warmth of our Temper. But we ought not to impute this humour to old Age alone; there are some persons, who imagine that Merit consists in despising every thing that is new, and Solidity, in valuing every thing that is old. There are some, who, of their own nature, are pleased with what they see, and fond of what they have seen. They will tell you wonders of an old Court, where there was nothing but what was ordinary, and endeavour to condemn the Grandeur and Magnificence which they have before their eyes. They are profuse of their praises to deceased Persons of but a common Virtue, and will hardly do justice to the Glory of the greatest Heroe, if he is living. The first obstacle to their esteem, is to live; as the most favourable recommendation, is to have been. After a Man is dead, they will praise what they blamed in him, whilst alive; and then, disengaged from the moroseness of their humour, they will justly render to his memory, what they unjustly denied to his person.

As for me, 'twas always my opinion, That to make a sound judgment of Men, and of their Works, it is necessary to consider them by themselves, and to have a contempt, or a respect for things past, according to their intrinsic Worth,

whatever it is. I am persuaded, that we ought not to oppose all new things merely out of a spirit of Aversion; nor on the other hand, to hunt after them out of love of Novelty; but to reject, or receive them, according to the true opinion we ought to conceive of them. We must part with our capricio's, and the fantasticalness of our humour, which, after all, is a hindrance to know things well. The most essential point is to acquire a true Judgment, and a pure Understanding. Nature prepares us for it, but experience and conversation with polite persons, brings it to perfection.



A

LETTER

TO MR. * * *,

Who could not endure that the Earl of ST. ALBANS should be in love in his old Age.

WHY should you wonder, that old Men have still an inclination to love? 'Tis not ridiculous for them to suffer themselves to be moved; but 'tis vain in them to pretend that they are able to please. I must own to you, I love the company of pretty Ladies, as much as ever I did; but I admire their Beauty without any design, heaven knows,

knows, of making any impression upon their hearts. I only endeavour to please my self, and study rather to find tenderness in my own breast, than in theirs. 'Tis by their charms and not by their favours, that I pretend to be obliged; and if ever I complain of them, 'tis only of their disagreeableness, and not of their rigour.

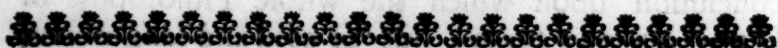
*Let others call you cruel and severe,
I'll call you kind for being Fair.
Thanks to your Eyes that far out-shine the day,
They warm and animate my clay.*

The greatest pleasure that old Men have left them, is to live; and nothing secures their Life so effectually as Love. *I think, therefore I am*, is the conclusion upon which the whole Philosophy of DESCARTES turns; but 'tis cold and languishing for an old Man. *I love, therefore I am*, is a consequence that has all life and spirit in it; it re-calls the desires of youth, and sometimes bribes my imagination to believe I am young.

You will tell me, that 'tis a double error, not to believe we are what we are, and to fancy we are what we are not. But what truths can be so advantageous as these pleasing errors, that take away from us all thoughts of the Evils we suffer; and in return, give us the sense of a Happiness we don't possess. But for want of considering things with due attention, we pretend that Love is only calculated for the meridian of Youth, tho Reason should restrain the violence of its inclinations; and we call those old people fools who have the courage to love; tho the wisest thing they can do, is to animate and awaken the lethargy of Nature, by flattering images of Love. What are we the better for Life, if we are not sensible that we are alive?

We purely owe our life to our love, if it is able to reanimate it, when the decays of age have made us lose all sense of it.

At this age all the springs of ambition leave us, the desire of glory no longer fires us, our strength fails us, our courage is extinguish'd, or at least weaken'd; Love, Love alone supplies the place of every virtue; it averts all thoughts of those evils that surround us, and the fear of those that threaten us. It turns aside the image of death, which otherwise wou'd continually present it self to our eyes: it dissipates the terrours of the imagination, and the troubles of the soul, and makes us the wisest men in the world, in respect of our selves, when it makes us pass for mad-men in the common opinion of others.



A

FUNERAL ORATION.

OF THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.*

I Have undertaken to day a thing without precedent; I have undertaken to make the *Funeral Oration* of a person, who is in better health than her Orator. This will surprize you, Gentlemen; but if we are permitted to take care of our Tombs,

to

* See the Life of M. de St. Evremond, under the year 1684.

to order Inscriptions for them, and to give a greater extent to our vanity, than nature has been willing to give to our lives: if those that are alive, may appoint the place where they are to lie, when they shall be no longer in the number of the living: if CHARLES the Fifth caused his own Funerals to be celebrated, and for two years assisted at the Prayers made on that occasion; can you think it strange, Gentlemen, that a Beauty more illustrious by her Charms, than that Emperor was by his Conquests, is willing to enjoy the happiness of her memory, and hear whilst she is alive, what may be said of her after her death? Let others endeavour to excite your sorrows for one that is dead, I will command your tears for one that is living; for a person who is to die one day, by the necessary misfortune of human condition, and who ought to live for ever, for the sake of her qualities.

Weep, Gentlemen; and not tarrying to bewail a Beauty till she is lost, afford your tears to the melancholy consideration that we must one day lose her. Weep, weep. Whoever expects a certain and unavoidable misfortune, may already style himself unfortunate. HORTENSIA will die; that Miracle of the World will one day die; the idea of so great a calamity, deserves your tears.

*Yes, charming Goddess, you must leave us,
Death will remove the heavenly prize;
And of those numerous Charms bereave us,
That now employ our hearts and eyes.*

Let us turn our imaginations from her Death to her Birth; that we may steal one moment from our grief.

HORTENSIA MANCINI was born at Rome of an illustrious family; her Ancestors were always considerable; but tho they had all of then govern'd Empires, as her Uncle², neither they nor that master of France, had brought her so much glory as she reflects back upon them. Heaven form'd this great master-piece by a model unknown to the age we live in. To the shame of our time, it bestow'd upon HORTENSIA the beauty of antient Greece, and the virtue of old Rome. Let us pass over her Infancy; you'll find an Account of it in her *Memoirs*³. Her Infancy was attended with a thousand pretty simplicities, but had nothing of importance enough for our subject. Gentlemen, I demand your tears, I demand your admiration. To obtain them, I have both Virtues and Misfortunes to represent to you.

It was not long before Cardinal MAZARIN was sensible of the advantages of his beautiful Niece, and therefore to do justice to the gifts of nature, he destin'd HORTENSIA to carry his name, and to possess his wealth after his death. She had charms that might engage even Kings to court her out of love; and a fortune capable to oblige them to do it out of interest. Those great inducements happening to be attended with a favourable conjuncture, the King of Great Britain sought her in marriage⁴: but the Cardinal, who was fitter to govern than to make Sovereigns, lost an opportunity, which he afterwards endeavoured to find in vain. The Queen, mother to the King of England, negotiated that affair her self; but a restored King, remembered the small respect that was shewn to a
banished

² Cardinal Mazarin.

³ See the *Memoirs* of the Dutches of Mazarin, in the third Volume.

⁴ See the *Life* of M. de St. Evremond, under the year 1675.

banished King; and so the propositions which could not be obtain'd at St. Jean de Luz, were rejected at London.

But why did not you come your self, Madam? For if you had, every thing would have yielded to your charms; and this day you would have made a powerful nation as happy as you should have been your self. However, heaven has in some sort obtain'd its end; for it had ordained you to be the delight of England, which accordingly you are.

This great affair having miscarried; the next thing to be done, was to enquire into the merits of our Courtiers, to the end you might be match'd with a Husband that was worthy of you. The Cardinal was tempted to make choice of the most accomplished; but he soon overcame the temptation: for, a false interest prevailing over his mind, he gave you to him who appeared to have the greatest fortune. Let us therefore lay the first fault of this marriage at his Eminency's door: for Monsieur MAZARIN is not to blame for having made his utmost efforts in order to obtain the most beautiful Lady, and the greatest Heiress in Europe.

Madam MAZARIN reckon'd that obedience was her first duty, and for that reason surrender'd her self to the inclination of her Uncle, as well from a principle of gratitude, as of submission. The Cardinal, who ought to have been sensible of the natural aversion which heaven had inspired into their hearts, and of the invincible contrariety that was in the tempers of those two persons; the Cardinal, I say, neither understood nor foresaw any thing of this; or, if he did, preferr'd a little wealth, a small interest, and some apparent advantage, to the quiet of a Niece whom he was so fond of. He is the first person to be blam'd for these ill-match'd knots, those unfortunate chains, those bonds that

were so unsutably contriv'd, and so justly broken. Here all the Cardinal's reputation is blown up at once. He govern'd Cardinal RICHELIEU, who govern'd the Kingdom; but he married his Niece to Monsieur MAZARIN: he lost his reputation. He govern'd LEWIS XIII. after the death of his great Minister, and the Queen Regent, after that of the King her husband; but he married his Niece to Monsieur MAZARIN: all his reputation is lost. If any allowance can be made to his Eminency upon this score, we should throw the fault upon the weakness of a dying man: for to expect a man should be wise and prudent at the point of death, would be to expect too much.

I remember the day after this unhappy Marriage, the Physicians assured the Marechal of Clerembaut, that the Cardinal was better. But the Marechal answer'd, *He is a dead man: he has married his Niece to Monsieur MAZARIN; his brain is disorder'd, his head is affected; he is a dead man.* Let us pardon this great Cardinal then, upon the account of his illness; let us pardon him on the account of the misery of our state: there's no man alive, who may not some time or other stand in need of such an apology. Let us weep then, Gentlemen, both out of compassion, and out of interest; for we have but too much reason to shed tears.

I find my compassion reaches even to Monsieur MAZARIN; he who is the cause of the misfortune of others, is really to be pitied himself. Do but consider what a condition he has brought himself to, Gentlemen; and then I'm sure you will be as much dispos'd to bewail him as I am. Monsieur MAZARIN groans under the load of riches and honours, that have been heap'd upon him; that fortune which in appearance raises him, does in reality only depress and overwhelm him: grandeur is a punishment to him, and wealth is his misery.

He

He has reason to hate a Marriage, which has ingag'd him in the affairs of the world; nor has he less reason to repent his having obtain'd that which he desired with so much ardour. He might have led a happy life in the Monastery of la Trape, or in some other holy and retired Society, but for this marriage, which has been so fatal to both parties. The interests of this world have made him fall a prey to the Devotionaries of the age; those spiritual cheats, who make their court with great artifice; who lay snares for the good-nature of simple and innocent souls, those souls who, from a spirit of holy usury, ruin themselves by lending to people who promise *Cent per Cent* interest in the next world.

But the greatest evil does not lie in giving, even supposing one gives very unseasonably; but in suffering things to be taken away, or to be lost. A preposterous godliness makes him cover the nudities of Pictures: a scruple of a like nature is the occasion of maiming and disfiguring Statues. One day the Pictures are carry'd off; another day the Hangings are taken away: Governments are sold, Money is squander'd away; every thing is wasted, and nothing left to be enjoyed. This, Gentlemen, is the miserable condition of Monsieur MAZARIN: and ought not he then to have a share in the tears which we shed?

But, Madam MAZARIN is to be a thousand times more lamented: 'tis to her griefs that we owe the largest share of our pity. That Husband being sensible how unworthy he was of his Wife, debars her the sight of every body: he drags her from Paris, where she was brought up, in order to carry her from Province to Province, from Town to Town, from one Country place to another; always sure of a journey, never certain of an abode. He gives her all the disgust that assiduity
can

can produce, and all the discontent that constraint can create: he omits nothing that may render himself hateful; tho' he might have spar'd the pains which Nature had already taken to make him so. As they who offend never forgive, so Monsieur MAZARIN, the more his wife suffer'd, the worse he used her; and by degrees came to be a great tyrant to that person, to whom all men of honour and breeding would have chosen to become slaves. One would have thought that Madam MAZARIN had no more hardships to dread, after what she had suffer'd; but this was a mistake, Gentlemen, for the greatest of all was yet to come. Madam MAZARIN, who was more jealous of her Reason than of her Beauty or her Fortune, finds her self subjected to a man who looks upon all the advantages of reason and good sense as crimes, and all the visions of fancy, as the extraordinary graces of Heaven. He is full of Revelations and Prophecies. He admonishes and fore-warns, as having a commission from Angels; he commands and threatens, as being authorized by God. There is no farther occasion for seeking the will of Heaven either in *Scripture* or *Tradition*; for that is framed in the imagination, and explain'd by the mouth of Monsieur MAZARIN. You have suffer'd your self to be ruin'd by an Extravagant, to be treated as a slave by a Tyrant: behold you are at the mercy of a Prophet, HORTENSIA, who is on the search for new inventions to torment you, in the imposture of hypocrites, and the visions of fanatics. The artifices of knaves, and the silliness of fools, every thing combines in order to persecute you.

Look out, Gentlemen, for the most docible, the most submissive woman in nature, and put her to such-like trials: you'll find she will not bear with her Husband eight days, what Madam MAZA-

RIN

RIN has bore with hers five years. We have reason to be astonish'd that she would not separate from her husband sooner; we have reason to wonder at her patience. If there is any thing to be charged upon her, it is not that she left him, but that she lived with him so long as she did. What was your Glory a doing, Madam, in the time of so shameful a slavery? You made your self unworthy of the favours of the Cardinal; you betray'd his pretensions by a mean compliance, which suffer'd that Fortune to go to ruin, which was given to maintain you. You render'd your self unworthy of the favours of Heaven, which had bestow'd so great perfection upon you, by venturing to lose your Reason in the long and contagious commerce you had with Monsieur MAZARIN. Return thanks to God for the good and wise resolution which he put into your heart; your liberty is his work; if he had not inspir'd into you his intentions, a natural timidity, a scrupulous conduct, a mistaken shame would have still kept you with your Husband, and you should have yet remain'd subject to his extravagant Inspirations. Return thanks to God, Madam, for he has deliver'd you. 'Tis true, this deliverance has cost you all your Riches, but you have still preserv'd all your Reason: your condition is not unhappy. You are divested of every thing that you owed to fortune; but you could never be robb'd of the advantages which nature bestowed upon you. The greatness of your Soul, the strength of your Reason, and the charms of your Face, continue with you: your condition is not unhappy. When Monsieur MAZARIN suffers the Cardinal's name to be forgotten in France, you enlarge the glory of it among strangers: your condition is not unhappy. There is no nation that does not pay a voluntary homage to the power of your Charms. There is no Queen,
 3 who

who hath not a greater ambition for your Beauty, than you can possibly have for her Grandeur: your condition is not unhappy.

*All climes and countries do adore her,
Fresh triumphs on her Beauties wait,
The world unjustly calls her Rover,
She only views the limits of her State.*

What Country is there which Madam MAZARIN has not seen? what Nation has seen her that has not admir'd her? Rome beheld her with as great admiration as Paris did. That City, in all ages of the world so glorious, boasts more of giving her to the world, than producing such a number of Heroes. She believes that so extraordinary a Beauty is preferable to the greatest Valour, and that more conquests were to be gained by her eyes, than by the arms of her great men. Italy, Madam, will be everlastingly obliged to you for abolishing those importunate rules, that bring a greater constraint than regularity with them: for freeing her from a science of formalities, ceremonies, and affected civilities; from the tyranny of premeditated respects, that render men unsociable, even in society it self. 'Tis Madam MAZARIN who has banish'd all Grimace, and all Affectation; who has destroy'd that art of an outward behaviour, which only regulates appearances; that study of exterior things, that only composes mens countenances. 'Tis she who has render'd ridiculous a stiff aukward gravity, which supply'd the place of prudence, and politicks without affairs and without interest, busied only to conceal one's unserviceableness. 'Tis she, who has introduced a sweet and innocent Liberty; who has rendered Conversation more

more agreeable, and Pleasures more pure and delicate.

A fatality caused her to come to Rome, and a fatality caused her to leave it. My Lady, the Constable COLONNA, had a mind to leave her Husband, and imparted this resolution to her sister. Her sister, as young as she was, represented to her, upon this occasion, all that a mother could have done to hinder it. But seeing her unalterably fix'd to execute her design, she follow'd her out of love and affection, who could not be dissuaded by prudence; and shared with her all the dangers of flight, the fears, the inquietudes, and the inconveniencies that always attend such resolutions. Fortune, who has a great power in our enterprises, but a greater in our adventures, made my Lady, the Constable, wander from nation to nation, and threw her at last into a Convent at Madrid. Right reason advised Madam MAZARIN to seek her repose; and a desire of Retirement obliged her to settle her abode at Chambery. There she found in her self, by her Reflections; in the commerce with the learned Men, by their Conversations; in Books, by reading; and in Nature, by her observations; all that solid satisfaction which a Court does not give to Courtiers, who are either too much taken up with business, or too much dissolved in pleasure. Three whole years did Madam MAZARIN live at Chambery, always in a state of tranquillity, but never obscure. Whatever inclinations she might have to conceal her self, her merit establish'd for her a small Empire in spite of her; and, in effect, she reign'd over that City, and over the Nation. Every one acknowledged with pleasure, that superiority which nature had given her; even he who enjoy'd it over all the rest by virtue of his birth, forgot it freely, and entered into the same subjection with his people.

ple. Those of the greatest merit and quality quitted the Court, and neglected the service of their Prince, to apply themselves particularly to that of Madam MAZARIN: and considerable persons of remote Countries pretended a voyage to Italy, to furnish themselves with an opportunity to see her. 'Twas an extraordinary thing to be able to establish a Court at Chambery: 'twas, as it were, a prodigy, that a Beauty which had a mind to conceal it self in places almost inaccessible, should make a greater noise in Europe, than all the other Ladies together.

The most beautiful persons of every nation had the displeasure to hear continual mention made of an absent Fair. The most lovely Creatures had a secret enemy that ruin'd all the impressions they could make. It was the idea of Madam MAZARIN, which was preciously preserved after she had been seen; and was formed with pleasure where she had never been.

Such was the conduct of Madam MAZARIN, such was her condition, when the Dutchess of York, her relation, passed thro' Chambery, as she was coming to the Duke her Husband. The singular merit of the Dutchess, her beauty, her wit, and her virtue, inspir'd Madam MAZARIN with a desire to accompany her; but her Affairs did not permit her: so she was obliged to delay that voyage till a more favourable opportunity. The curiosity to see one of the greatest Courts in the world, which she had never beheld, fortify'd her in this resolution: and the death of the Duke of Savoy determin'd it^s. This Prince had the same sentiments of her, as all people that had the happiness to behold her. He had admir'd her at Turin,

^s Charles Emanuel, Duke of Savoy, died on the 12th of June, 1673.

rin, and this admiration the Dutchess of Savoy interpreted to be Love. An impression of jealousy produced a behaviour very little obliging towards the person who had caused it. There needed no more than this to oblige Madam MAZARIN to depart out of a Country, where the new Regent was in a manner absolute. To separate her self from the Dutchess of Savoy, and approach the Dutchess of York, was but one and the same resolution. HORTENSIA acquainted her friends with this determination, who employed all their arguments to dissuade her from it, but 'twas in vain. Never was seen so great an effusion of tears. As for her own part, she was not insensible of the general grief that was occasioned by the thoughts of her departure; persons so lively affected as they were, did affect her: but this resolution was taken up, and in spite of all their regrets she concludes to depart.

What other courage but that of Madam MAZARIN, would have undertaken so long, so difficult, and so dangerous a Voyage? Before she could accomplish it, she must traverse savage Nations, and Nations that were up in arms; she must sweeten the one, and make her self be respected by the other. She understood not the Language of any of these People, but they understood her. Her eyes speak an universal Language, which causes her to be understood by all mankind. What Mountains, what Forests, what Rivers had she not to pass? What did she not suffer from the Wind, the Snow, and the Rains? What difficulties of the ways, what rigour of the season, what mighty inconveniences had she not to struggle with, which yet did but little injury to her Beauty? Never did HELENA appear so charming as HORTENSIA was! but HORTENSIA, that beautiful innocent fugitive, did fly from an unjust Husband, and did

not follow a Lover. With the face of **HELENA**, Madam **MAZARIN** had the air, the habit, and the equipage of a Queen of the Amazons! She seem'd equally fit to charm, and to fight. One might say, she went to give Love to all the Princes whom she was to meet in her passage, and to command all the Troops which they commanded. The first she had in her power, but it was not her design: she made some essay of the second; for the Troops receiv'd her orders more voluntarily than those of their Generals. After she had travell'd more than three hundred leagues, she arriv'd in Holland, and made no longer a stay at Amsterdam, than was necessary to view the Rarities of so remarkable and famous a City. After she had satisfy'd her curiosity, she came to the Brill, where she embarqu'd for England. A storm seem'd to be wanting in this voyage; and there happened one, which lasted five days. The storm was as furious as it was long; and made the Seamen lose all their conduct and resolution, and the Passengers all their hopes. Madam **MAZARIN** alone was exempt from lamentation; less importunate with Heaven to preserve her, than submitting and resigning her self to its will. But it had been decreed she should visit England. She landed there, and in a short time came safe to London⁶. All people had a great curiosity to see her: but the Ladies had the greatest alarm at her arrival. The English, who were in possession of the Empire of Beauty, saw it lost, not without great regret, to a stranger; and 'tis natural to be sensibly concerned for the loss of the sweetest of all vanities. So considerable an interest, was the only thing in the world that could unite them. Old enemies

⁶ Madam Mazarin came into England in the Month of December, 1675.

enemies were then reconciled ; those that were indifferent, now began to visit one another, and friends link'd themselves more strictly together than before. These confederates very well foresaw their misfortune ; but being willing to delay it, they prepared to defend an interest, which was dearer to them than their lives. Madam MAZARIN had nothing to defend her self but her Charms and her Virtues : this was enough to make her apprehensive of nothing. After she had kept her chamber for some time, less to recover the fatigues of her Journey, than to prepare her Equipage, she appear'd at Whitehall.

*Fair Beauties of Whitehall give way,
HORTENSIA does her Charms display.
She comes, she comes ! resign the day,
She must reign, and you obey.*

From that day they never disputed the Prize with her in publick : but they carried on a secret war against her within doors ; where all ended either in private injuries, which never arrived to her knowledge ; or in vain murmurs which she despised. The World now beheld an extraordinary turn. Those that were the most violently transported against her, were the first that imitated her. They would dress themselves like her : but this was neither her Dress nor Habit. For her Person gave a new grace to every thing she wore, and those that endeavour'd to imitate her air and dress, wanted the principal thing, her person. One might say of her, what was said, with less reason, of the late Dutchess of Orleans ; *all the world imitates her, and no one resembles her.*

As for the Men, she made all that pretended to nicety and judgment, her subjects, that beheld her. They are only men of a bad taste, and worse wit, that can defend the remainder of their Liberty against her. Happy in the conquest she makes ! more happy in those she doth not make ! Madam MAZARIN no sooner arrives to any place, but she establishes a House there, which causes the rest to be abandoned : the greatest freedom in the world is to be seen there, and an equal discretion : every one is more commodiously used there than at home ; and more respectfully than at Court. 'Tis true, there are frequent Disputes there, but then it is with more knowledge than heat : 'tis not done out of a spirit of contradiction, but fully to discover the matters in agitation : rather to animate Conversation than to inflame it.

The Play there is very inconsiderable ; 'tis the diversion only that makes the play. You can neither discover in their faces the fear of losing, nor a concern for what is lost. Some of them are so far disinterested, that they are reproach'd for rejoicing at their own losing, and afflicting themselves when they are winning. Play is follow'd by the best Repasts in the world. One may there see every thing that comes from France for the delicate ; and all that comes from the Indies for the curious ; even the common meats become rare by the exquisite relish which is bestowed upon them. 'Tis not such a plenty as may make us fear a dissipation ; 'tis not a frugality that shews either avarice or penury. The management of her house is not so niggard and fullen, as to content it self merely with satisfying the necessities of life, and afford nothing to the pleasures of it. She loves a good order that furnishes every thing that can be desired, and that wisely manages the use of it ; so that nothing may be wanting. There is certainly nothing
so

so well regulated as this family : but Madam MAZARIN diffuses thro'out the whole, I do not know what sort of an easy air ; something free and natural that conceals the regulation of it. One would conclude that things moved of themselves, so secret is the ordering of them, and so difficult to be perceived.

Let Madam MAZARIN change her lodgings, and the difference of places is insensible : wherever she goes, we see nothing but her ; and if we see her we see every thing. They never come soon enough, and never depart late enough : they go to bed with regret to have left her, and they rise with desire to behold her afresh.

But how great is the uncertainty of our human condition ! at the time, when she innocently enjoy'd all the pleasures which inclination desires, and reason does not prohibit ; that she had the satisfaction to see her self beloved and esteemed by all the world ; that those Ladies who had opposed themselves to her at first, were charmed by her conversation ; that she had, as it were, extinguished self-love in the soul of her friends, every one expressing the same kind sentiments for her, which it is natural to have for one's self : at the time, when the vainest, and the greatest admirers of themselves forbore to contend with her beauty ; that envy had concealed it self in the bottom of their hearts ; that all repining against her was private, or appeared ridiculous as soon as it began to be perceived : at this happy time, an extraordinary indisposition seizes her, in spite of all her Charms, in spite of all our Admiration, and Love. You were just a perishing, HORTENSIA, and so were we : you, by the violence of your pain ; we, by that of our concern for you. But it was more than being simply afflicted : we felt all that you did, and were sick as you were. Your unequal moments sometimes carried

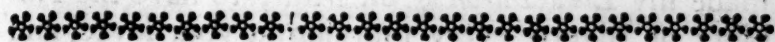
ried you to the brink of death ; and sometimes recalled you to life : we were subject to all the accidents of your sickness ; and to know how it fared with you, it was not at all necessary to enquire after your health ; they needed only observe in what state we found our selves.

Praised be that universal dispenser of good and evil ; praised be Heaven that has restored you to our vows, and given us again to our selves. Behold, you are living, and so are we ; but we have not as yet recover'd the cruel fright that this danger gave us : a melancholy idea still remains behind, which makes us more lively conceive what must one day happen. Nature will destroy this beauteous fabrick, which it has taken so much pains to frame. Nothing can exempt it from that lamentable Law to which we are all subject. She who so visibly distinguishes her self from others, during her Life, will be confounded with the meanest at her Death. And wilt thou then complain, thou who hast only an ordinary Genius, a common Merit, or an indifferent Beauty ? dost thou complain that thou must die ? Don't murmur, unjust as ye are ; HORTENSIA will die like you. A time will come (Oh that this unfortunate time would never come !) when they will say of this miracle,

*She's now resolv'd to common clay,
She that did Beauty's Empire sway.
Fate, cruel Fate, would have it so,
Fate, that governs all below.
Now, vulgar souls, learn to resign your breath,
And, without murmuring, submit to Death⁷.*

A

⁷ An imitation of a Sonnet of Malherbe, on the Death of the Duke of Orleans.



A

L E T T E R

T O T H E

COUNT DE GRAMMONT.

I AM inform'd by the Mareſchal DE CREQUY, that you are become one of the richeſt Noblemen at Court¹. If Riches, which uſe to ſoften the courage, and lay induſtry aſleep, have done no injury to the good qualities of my Hero, I rejoice with all my heart at the alteration of your fortune: but if they have ruin'd the Virtues of the *Chevalier*, and the Merit of the *Count*, I repent for not having executed the deſign I have had ſo often of killing you, to ſecure the honour of your memory. What a vexation will it be to me, to ſee you renounce Play, and abandon the Ladies! To ſee you heap up filthy Mammon for the marriage of your Daughter, to deſire dirty acres, and talk of Lands and Tenements as neceſſary things for the eſtabliſhment of a family! What a ſtrange alteration will it be in you to make ſuch a buſſle for land, vile paltry land, after you have ſo often deſpiſed it as unworthy of you, and abandon'd it to the Rooks, the Crows, and the Magpies! What a ſtrange alteration,

X 4

¹ The Eſtate of the Count de Toulangeon, his elder Brother, who dyed in 1679, had fallen to him.

teration, if nothing will serve your turn but to be made my *Lord Baron of St. Meat*, to have the Nobility of Bigorre every morning at your levee, and to entertain your neighbours with that pretty winning way which gains all the hearts of Gascony.

*So much admir'd, and follow'd by so few,
Will you your former Glories then undo?*

What will become of all those advantages which I gave you, in preference even to SOLOMON?

*That mighty Prince, who knew the hidden power
Of every verdant plant, and smiling flower;
While he had vigour left, shot pleasure flying,
And show'd his heavenly wisdom by enjoying.*

A very fine commendation truly, my Lord, for you to be effaced out of the memory of your old friends; while all the satisfaction you can expect, will be to hear your trusty Gascons and the good people of Bearn cry, *My Lord the Count keeps a most noble house; they eat all in the plate of Monsieur DE TOULONGEON; every thing is manag'd in excellent order: if things go on at this rate, Mademoiselle DE GRAMMONT will be one of the greatest fortunes at Court.* Let not, my Lord, any wicked discourses of this nature tempt you. He that has promis'd to take care of the Larks, will take care of your Children. You have nothing to do, but consult your reputation and pleasure.

*Be rich, my Lord, and let both Indies meet
To lay their brightest treasures at your feet.
Be rich; but why should wealth alone employ
Your precious hours, and rob your soul of joy?*

Take

*Take my advice, Love's better game pursue,
And Love will find you something still to do.
Still you have charms enough to please the fair,
Vigour to win, and rhet'rick to ensnare.
Nay, from the root tho all the sap were gone,
Be govern'd by your friend, and still love on.*

*King SOLOMON, almost as wise as you,
With constant homage to Love's Altars flew.
His vows were answer'd, and his setting sun
Shin'd with a fiercer lustre than his noon.*

*WALLER, in whom no signs of age appear,
Who rivals all our youth in wit and air;
Derives new life from CELIA, while he sips
Eternal youth on her ambrosial lips.
Dull sots may call it weakness, if they please;
But is't a weakness to consult one's ease?
Love all defects with generous care supplies,
And Beauty gives what envious Age denies.*

*Me too, who hourly with time's malice strive,
The fair, the kind HORTENSIA keeps alive,
Her heavenly rays the drooping plant revive.
No sullen damps of heaviness and care,
No black reflections, fraught with wild despair,
Approach my breast while my HORTENSIA's there.
Her charming looks, while they vouchsafe a smile,
Into life's glimmering lamp pour vital oil;
Her sovereign glances silently impart
Joy to my soul, and transports to my heart.
Devouring Time whets his sharp teeth in vain,
While she the tottering fabrick does sustain.*

Thus

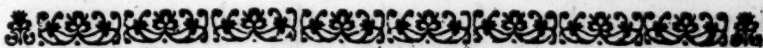
*Thus I, preserv'd by a reflecting fire,
 Live by the warmth HORTENSIA'S rays inspire.
 Youth from her eyes shoots down into my blood,
 And with its beams unthaws the icy flood.
 Like clock-work, by her winding up, I move,
 And owe my motions to almighty Love.*

*Blame me not then, if I such helps employ
 To sooth my pains, and flatter me with joy,
 In vain, alas ! from Books we seek relief,
 Books, that can scarce oppose a common grief.
 In vain Philosophers our ills engage :
 Love is the best Elixir for old-age.*

*I wou'd wish you the age of a Patriarch, did not
 I know that extraordinary persons like you, have a
 greater regard for their glory than length of life.*

*To the last scene your glorious course maintain,
 The Womens joy, and envy of the Men.
 In you let all united talents shine,
 The Courtier, Hero, and the Statesman join.
 Your blooming youth did the great RICHELIEU
 please,*

*You knew his haughty stubborn heart to seize,
 Thro' groves of Pikes, thro' Sieges and Alarms,
 Your manly vigour follow'd CONDE'S arms.
 Happy, thrice happy now, near LEWIS plac'd,
 You flourish, with your Prince's favours blest.
 While Europe trembling at his awful nod,
 With secret horror does confess the God.
 But I must this inspiring theme give o'er,
 And what I can't describe, must silently adore.*



A

L E T T E R

To young DERY'.

My Dear Boy,

I Don't wonder at your having an invincible aversion hitherto against a thing, which of all others, concerns you the most nearly. You have been advised by rustical and clownish people, to get your self *gelt*: an expression so base and odious, that it would have shock'd a far less delicate mind, than yours. As for my own part, my dear Boy; I shall endeavour to promote your advantage, in a more agreeable way; and I will tell you with all the terms of insinuation, that you must be sweetned by a gentle Operation, which will secure to you the fineness of your complexion a long time, and preserve the tunefulness of your voice all your life.

Those Guineas, those red Cloathes, those little Horses which you get, are not given to Mr. DERY's son for his noble birth; 'tis your face and your voice, that procure you them. In three or four years, alas! you will lose the charms of both, if you have not the wit to prevent that loss; and the source of all those allurements will be dried up.

* *The Dutches of Mazarin's Page, who sung well.*

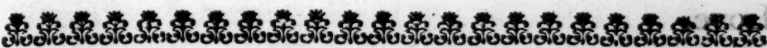
up. Now you talk familiarly with Kings, you are careffed by Dutcheffes, and praised by all the persons of quality; but when the charms of your Voice are gone, you will only be a fit companion for POMPEY², and perhaps be despised by Mr. STOURTON³.

But you are afraid, you say, that you will be less in the Ladies favour. Lay aside all such apprehensions; the Age in which we live, is not an age of simpletons; the merit which follows the operation is well known; and for one Mistress that Mr. DERY, as he was made by nature, might have had, Mr. DERY softned by art, shall have a hundred. You are sure then of having Mistresses enow, which is a great happiness; you will have no Wife, which is being free of a great evil: happy in having no Wife, happier in being without children. Mr. DERY's Daughter would be got with child, his Son would be hanged; and what is yet more certain, his Wife would make him a Cuckold. Secure your self against those misfortunes, by a speedy Operation: thus you will be devoted purely to your self; proud of so small a merit, which will make your fortune, and procure you the friendship of all the World. If I live long enough to see you when your voice becomes rough, and your beard grows, you will be much blamed by every body. I desire you to prevent this, and believe me to be your most sincere friend.

REFLEC-

² The Dutcheffs of Mazarin's Negro.

³ The Dutcheffs of Mazarin's Page.



REFLECTIONS

UPON

RELIGION.

IF we only consider the repose of this life, 'twere well if Religion had more or less influence upon mankind. It constrains, but doth not subject enough; like some Governments, that take away the sweetness of liberty, and yet don't carry with them the advantages of subjection. The will makes us aspire but weakly after those good things that are promised, because it is not excited enough by the understanding, which is not enough convinced. We say, out of compliance, that *we believe* whatever authority enjoins us to believe: but without a particular grace, we are rather perplexed than persuaded of a thing that doth not fall under the evidence of our senses, and which affords no manner of demonstration to our minds.

This, in short, is the effect of Religion, with respect to ordinary men; let us now see the advantages of it in the truly and perfectly religious Man. The truly devout person breaks off with nature, if we may be allowed so to speak, to take pleasure in abstaining from pleasures; and while he subjects the body to the mind, he makes in some measure, even mortification and pain delightful to himself. Philosophy goes no farther, than to teach us to endure misfortunes: the Christian Religion makes us enjoy them as blessings; and we may

say seriously of it, what has been gallantly said of Love,

All other pleasures are not worth its pains¹.

A true Christian knows how to make his advantage of every thing. The evils which he suffers, are the good things which God sends him: the good things which he wants, are evils, from which Providence has secured him. Every thing is a benefit to him, every thing in this world is a mercy; and when, by the necessity of his mortal condition, he must die, he looks upon the end of Life, as a passage to one more happy, which is to last for ever.

Such is the felicity of a true Christian, whilst uncertainty makes the condition of all others unhappy. To say the truth, most of us are unresolved; and not fully determined either to good or evil. We find in our selves a continual turn and return from Nature to Religion, and from Religion to Nature. If we abandon the care of our Salvation to satisfy our Inclinations, those very inclinations soon rise up against our pleasures; and a disgust for those objects, which flatter'd us most of all, makes us return to the care of our salvation. If on the other hand, we renounce our Pleasures out of a principle of conscience, the same thing happens to us in our search after salvation; for either habitude or tediousness makes us return to the objects of our first inclinations.

I have shown how it succeeds with us, as to Religion within our selves: let us now observe what judgment the Publick makes of it. If we forsake God for the World, we are looked upon as impious persons. If we forsake the World for God, we are thought to be weak, and decayed in our understanding;

M. de Charleval.

derstanding; and we are as little pardoned for sacrificing fortune to Religion, as Religion to fortune. The single example of the Cardinal de RETS², will suffice to justify my assertion. When he was made Cardinal by intrigues, factions, and tumults, the world exclaimed against him as an ambitious man, who sacrificed, not only the publick, but his conscience, and religion, to his fortune (as they said): when he left the cares of earth for those of Heaven; when the persuasion of another Life made him consider the grandeur of this as a Chimera, then they said his head was turned, and made that to pass for a scandalous weakness in him, which is proposed to us in Christianity, as the greatest Virtue.

Men of mean qualities, show but little favour to great Virtues; a lofty Wisdom offends an ordinary Reason. Mine, as ordinary as it is, admires a person who is thorowly persuaded, and would admire him still more, could I find him insensible to all the temptations of fortune. I somewhat question the sincerity of those Preachers, who offer us the Kingdom of Heaven in publick, and yet solicit a small Benefice in private, with all the vigour and application imaginable.

The sole idea of eternal happiness renders the possession of every thing else contemptible to a man of true belief: but because few of us have Faith, few of us are able to defend this idea against real objects; the hope of what is promised to us, naturally yielding to the enjoyment of what is before us. With the greatest part of Christians, the desire of believing serves instead of belief: the Will gives them a sort of Faith by its desires, which the Understanding

² John-Francis-Paul de Gondi, Cardinal de Retz, and Archbishop of Paris. He died in the year 1679. His Memoirs have been lately publish'd in French, and translated into English.

derstanding with all its light refuses. I have known some devout men, that in a strange sort of a contrariety between their affection and their reason, loved God truly without having any great belief in him. When they abandoned themselves to the affection of their heart, there was nothing but zeal for Religion; 'twas all fervency and love: when they examined their reason, they were amazed to see that they could not comprehend what they lov'd; and were at a loss how to answer themselves upon the Subject of their Love. Then, to deliver my self in spiritual terms, *they wanted Consolations*; and fell into that sad state of Devotion, which is called *Aridity* and *Dryness* in the language of the Monasteries.

God alone is able to give us a steady, firm and real Faith. All that we can do of our selves, is to humble our understanding in opposition to the light of nature, and to execute with submission what is prescribed to us. Humanity easily mingles its errors in matters of Faith; but it seldom mistakes in the practice of Virtues: for it is less in our power to think justly of the things of heaven, than to do well. A man can never be mistaken in actions of Justice and Charity. Sometimes Heaven ordains, and Nature makes an opposition: sometimes Nature demands what Reason forbids. But in matters of Charity all debates are silenced, and there is, as it were, a general agreement between Heaven, Nature and Reason.

That



That DEVOTION is our last
LOVE.

DEvotion is our last Love, in which the Soul, that thinks it aspires only after the felicity of another Life, endeavours, without thinking of it, to procure some new comfort in this. The habit of sinning is an old passion or inclination, which now affords nothing but disgusts; from whence it commonly falls out, that we turn to God out of a fondness for change, in order to form in our soul new desires, and raise in it the motions of a growing passion. Devotion will sometimes restore to an old Woman that delicacy of sentiment, and that tenderness of heart, which the most youthful could not find in marriage, or in an old intrigue. A new Devotion is every way pleasing; nay, we are even pleased with talking of the old sins which we repent of; for there is a secret satisfaction in detesting that which has been offensive, and in calling to mind what was formerly agreeable in them.

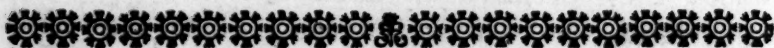
If we carefully examine a converted Debauchee, we will often find that he left off sinning only out of weariness and vexation for his past life. In effect, whom do we see quitting his vice at the time that it sooths his imagination, at the time when it appears with its allurements, and gives a taste for pleasures? We leave it off, when its charms are worn out, and a tiresome habit has sunk us insensibly into languishment. It is not therefore that which pleas'd us that we quit, when we change our

course of life; but 'tis that which we could not bear any longer: and then, the sacrifice which we offer up to God, is that of disgusts, which we endeavour to get rid of at any rate.

There are two very different impressions of vice upon us. That which is irksome and languishing in the end, makes us detest the offence against God; that which in its beginning was delightful, makes us regret the pleasure without perceiving it; and this is the reason why there are but few conversions wherein is not felt a secret mixture of the pleasure of remembrance, and the sorrow of repentance. 'Tis true, we weep for an odious crime, with full bitterness; but our repentance for the vices, which were dear to us, always leaves some small tenderness for them, which is mingled with our tears. There is something of the amorous kind in our repenting of an amorous passion; and this passion is so natural in us, that we never repent having loved, without love. In effect, if a converted soul remembers its having sighed for Love; it either comes to love God, and thereof makes to it self a new subject of sighs and pantings; or it fixes its remembrance very agreeably upon the object of its past pleasures. The fear of Damnation, the image of Hell with all its fires, will never be able to remove out of that mind the idea of a lover; for it is not in the power of fear, but of love only, thorowly to efface love. I will say more: a person seriously touch'd, has no thoughts of saving himself, but of loving, when he unites himself to God. Salvation, which was the first of his cares, is swallow'd up in Love, which suffers no other cares in his mind, nor no other desires in his Soul, but purely its own. If in this state we have our thoughts fixed on eternity, this is not in order to apprehend the evils with which we are threatned, or hope for
the

the glory that is promised us ; but 'tis solely in order to love eternally, that we are pleased with contemplating an eternal duration. Where Love has once got the upper hand, there is no other passion that can subsist of it self: 'tis by it that we both hope and fear ; 'tis by it that both our joys and our griefs are formed ; suspicion, jealousy, and even hatred do insensibly take their rise from it ; and all those passions, which before were distinct and particular, are now only its movements, if we take the thing right. I hate an old Libertine as a wicked wretch, and despise him as a senseless creature, who understands not wherein his happiness consists. So long as he sets up to give every thing to Nature, he resists his last propension towards God, and denies Nature the only comfort which it requires of him. He abandon'd himself to its motions, so long as they were vicious ; he opposes its pleasure so soon as it becomes a Virtue. *All the Virtues, say they, are lost in Heaven, except Charity, that is to say, Love.* So that God, who preserves it in us after death, would never have us to divest our selves of it as long as we live.





A

LETTER TO A LADY

Who design'd to turn Devout.

I Am inform'd, Madam, that you design to turn Devout, and I heartily return God thanks for having more occasion, in our conversations, for it; the purity of those thoughts you are going to entertain, than for those that might be suggested to you by the Commerce of the World. I therefore conjure you, as one who is concern'd with Heaven, to take up a true Devotion; and in order to render your Conversion such as I would have it, it will not be improper to describe to you that of our Ladies, such as it is, that you may avoid the faults that attend it.

Their ordinary Repentance, as far as I have observ'd, is not so much a sorrow for their sins, as a regret for their pleasures: wherein they are themselves deceiv'd, amorously lamenting what they have lost, while they believe that they devoutly bewail what they have done.

Those decay'd beauties that give up themselves to God, fancy that they have extinguish'd old flames, which, however, secretly endeavour to kindle a-fresh; and their Love having only chang'd its object,

M. DE ST. EVREMOND. 341

object, they preserve for their last sufferings, the same sighs, and the same tears, which express'd their old torments. They have lost nothing of the first troubles of an amorous heart, such as fears, swoonings, and raptures : they retain its most endearing motions ; tender desires, soft sorrows, and precious languishments. When they were young, they sacrific'd Lovers : now they have none, they sacrifice themselves ; and the new Convert offers up to God the old Voluptuary.

I have known those whose Conversion was, in some measure, owing to the pleasure of change : others, who devoting themselves to God, felt a malicious joy from their fancied infidelity to the Men.

There are those who renounce the World, out of a spirit of revenge against the World who has left them : others again, who mix their natural vanity with such a renunciation ; and the same Pride that made them leave the Courtiers for the Prince, secretly flatters them that they can despise the Prince for God.

To some of them, God is a new Lover, that comforts them for him they have lost : in others, Devotion is a prospect of private interest, and the mysterious cloak of a new conduct.

There are some melancholy and reserv'd, who relish best an obscure pleasure, and prefer an awkward pretender to sanctity, before a handsome genteel lover : sometimes they design to raise themselves up to Heaven in good earnest ; and their weakness makes them rest by the way, with the Directors who conduct them. Devotion has some tenderness for God, which may easily return to a passion for Men.

I forgot to mention some women in retirement, who, in appearance, give up themselves to God, that they may, in some measure, shake off their

dependance on a Mother, or a Husband. There are others of a hundred different kinds: but very few wherein the character of a Woman does not appear, either in their humour, or their love.

To judge a-right of the merit of Devout women, we must rather consider what God requires of them, than what they design to do for God. For, in truth, all the mortifications they undergo, of their own motion, are as many agreeable effects of their fancy; and a woman is pretty well rewarded in this world, by being permitted to do what she pleases. We must observe how they behave themselves in those things which God exacts from their submission; and when they shall be regular in their manners; modest in their conversation; and patient of injuries; then shall I be satisfy'd of their Devotion by their conduct.

There are many passionate and Devout women, who think themselves acted by the ardour of a pure zeal; but there are few that wisely contain themselves within the limits of a sound and solid piety. There are a pretty good number of those who could die for God, thro' a sense of Love: but few who would live according to his precepts, with regularity and reason. You may expect any thing from their fervour and zeal, when attended with some disorder; but you can hardly hope for any thing from a Devotion, wherein they have occasion for evenness of temper, wisdom, and moderation.

Take advantage, Madam, of the errors of others: and as you design now to give up your self to God, let your Devotion consist less of what you love, than of what pleases him. If you don't beware, your heart will offer up to him its own affections, instead of receiving his impressions; and you will be wholly yours, when you shall fancy to be wholly his.

Not

Not but that there may be a holy and happy agreement between his will and yours. You may love what he loves; you may desire what he desires: but thro' a pleasing and secret impulse, we generally do what we desire our selves; and this ought to render us more cautious and attentive, that we may always act consonantly, and with regard to his will.

But in order to that, you need not, Madam, subject your self to the conduct of those Directors, who lead you into certain niceties of spirituality and devotion, which neither you, nor, for the most part, they themselves, understand. The will of God is not so abstruse, but that it easily discovers it self to those who design to follow it: so that, on most occasions, you shall have more need of submission than knowledge. Those precepts that have any relation to our desires, are clearly understood, and agreeably follow'd; those that thwart our inclinations, are likewise plain enough: but nature strives against them, and the untractable soul rejects their impression.

I discourse with you more seriously then at first I intended; and to conclude still more profitably, I would require two things of you, in the new course of Devotion you are going to enter upon. The first, that you take care, not to offer up your love to God, as an unprofitable passion, which you design to keep in ure: the second, that you never dissemble your animosities, under the appearance of zeal; and never persecute those you hate, under a false shew of piety.





OF THE
P O E M S

OF THE
A N T I E N T S.

NO man pays a greater veneration to the Works of the Antients than my self. I admire the Design, the Œconomy, the elevation of Spirit, the extent of Knowledge which are so visible in their Compositions: but the difference of Religion, Government, Customs, and Manners, have introduced so great a change in the world, that we must go, as it were, upon a new System, to suit with the inclination and genius of the present age.

And certainly my opinion must be accounted reasonable, by all those who will examine it. For if we give quite opposite characters, when we speak of the God of the Israelites, and of the God of the Christians; tho it be the same Deity: if we speak otherwise of the Lord of Hosts, of that terrible God, who commanded to destroy the enemy to the very last man; than we do of that God patient, meek, merciful, who enjoins to love them: if the Creation of the world is describ'd with one genius, and the Redemption of men with another; if we want one kind of eloquence to set forth the great-

greatness of the Father, who hath made all things ; and another kind to express the love of the Son, who was pleased to suffer all : why should there not be a new Art, a new Genius to pass from the false Gods to the true one ; from JUPITER, CYBELE, MERCURY, MARS, APOLLO, to JESUS CHRIST, the Virgin MARY, our Angels, and our Saints ?

Take away the Gods from the Antients, and you take from them all their Poems : the constitution of the Fable is in disorder ; and the design of it turned upside down. Without the Prayer of THETIS to JUPITER, and the Dream which JUPITER sends to AGAMEMNON, there will be no *Ilias* ; without MINERVA, no *Odysssea* ; without the protection of JUPITER, and the assistance of VENUS, no *Æneis*. The Gods assembled in heaven, and there debated what was to be done upon earth : they formed resolutions, and were no less necessary to execute than to take them. These immortal Leaders of parties among men, contrived all, gave life to all ; inspired force and courage ; engaged themselves in fight ; and, if we except AJAX, who asked nothing of them but light, there was no considerable warrior that had not his God upon his chariot, as well as his Squire ; the God to conduct his spear ; the Squire to direct his horses. Men were pure machines, whom secret springs put in motion ; and those springs were nothing else but the inspiration of their Gods and Godesses.

The Divinity we serve is more favourable to the liberty of men. We are in his hands, like the rest of the universe, by way of dependance ; but in our own to deliberate and to act. I confess we ought always to beg his protection. LUCRETIVS himself asks it, and in that very Book, where he attacks Providence with all the force of his wit, he
falls

falls a praying, and implores that power which governs us, to be so gracious as to avert all misfortunes from him,

Quod procul à nobis fleat natura gubernans¹.

However, we should not introduce this formidable Majesty upon every trifling occasion, whose very name ought never to be used in vain. If the false Divinities are mixed in fictions, 'tis no great matter; those are downright Fables, and vain effects of the Poet's imagination. As for Christians, they ought to give nothing but truth to him, who is truth it self; and they should adapt all their discourses to his wisdom, and to his goodness.

This great change is follow'd by that of Manners, which by reason of their being civilized, and soften'd at present, can't suffer that wild and unbecoming freedom that was assumed in former times. 'Tis this change that makes us nauseate the vile and brutal scolding between ACHILLES and AGAMEMNON. Upon this score AGAMEMNON appears odious to us, when we see him take away that Trojan's life, whom MENELAUS, upon whose account the war was made, had generously pardon'd. AGAMEMNON the *King of Kings*², who ought to have shown an example of virtue to all the Princes, and the People; the base AGAMEMNON kills this miserable wretch with his own hand. 'Tis on the same account that ACHILLES fills us with horror, when he butchers young LYCAON, who intreated him so tenderly for his life. 'Tis then we hate him even to his Virtues, when he ties the body of HECTOR to his chariot, and drags

¹ Lucret. Lib. I. See M. Bayle's Dictionary in the Article of Lucretius.

² So Homer calls him.

drags him inhumanly to the Camp of the Greeks. I loved him as a valiant man, and as the friend of PATROCLUS: the cruelty of this action makes me abhor his valour, and his friendship. 'Tis quite otherwise with HECTOR: his good qualities return into our minds; we pity and lament him the more for his sufferings; his idea on the sudden becomes very dear, and raises all our thoughts in his favour.

Let it not be said in the behalf of ACHILLES, that HECTOR had kill'd his dear PATROCLUS. The resentment of his death doth not excuse him to us. An affliction that could permit him to suspend his revenge, and to tarry till his arms were made before he went to the combat; an affliction so patient ought not to have carried him to this unusual barbarity, after the fight was over. But let us acquit Friendship of an imputation so odious. The sweetest, the tenderest of all Virtues, does not use to produce effects so contrary to its Nature. ACHILLES had really this cruelty in the bottom of his Nature. It is not to the friend of PATROCLUS, but to the inhumane and inexorable ACHILLES, that it belongs.

This all the world will easily agree to. However, the vices of the Hero are no faults in the Poet. HOMER's design was to paint Nature such as he saw it, and not to improve it in his Heroes. He has described them with more passions, than virtues: now Passion has its foundation in Nature, and Virtue is a thing acquired by the improvement of our Reason.

Politicks had not yet united men, by the bonds of a rational Society; nor polished them enough for others: Morality had not yet accomplished them for themselves. Good qualities were not sufficiently distinguished from the bad. ULYSSES was prudent, and fearful; provident against dangers; industrious

dustrious to get out of them; valiant sometimes, when there was less danger to be so, than otherwise. *ACHILLES* was valiant and fierce; and (what *HORACE* would not set down in his Character of him) condescending sometimes to puerile follies. As his Nature was uncertain, and irregular; hence it came to pass that his behaviour was sometimes fierce, and sometimes childish. One while he drags the body of *HECTOR* in a barbarous manner; now he whines to the Goddess his Mother, like a child, to drive away the flies from that of *PATROCLUS*'s, his dear friend.

Their Customs differ no less from ours, than their morals. Two Heroes ready for the combat would not amuse themselves now a-days in setting forth their Genealogy: but it is easy to observe in the *Ilias*, nay in the *Odyssea*, and the *Æneis* too, that such a method was then practised. Men harangued before they fought, just as they make speeches in England, before they are hanged.

As for Comparisons, discretion will teach us to use them more sparingly than the Antients: good sense, will render them just; invention, new. The *Sun*, the *Moon*, the *Stars*, the *Elements*, will lend us no more a worn-out magnificence. *Wolves*, *Shepherds*, and *Flocks*, will not afford us a simplicity too much known and threadbare.

I am of opinion, there is an infinite number of Comparisons, that are more like one another than the things they are compared to. A *Goshawk*, that strikes a *Pidgeon*; a *Sparhawk* that dares the little Birds; a *Falcon* that makes a stoop; are liker one another in the swiftness of their flight, than the men to whom they are compared for their Impetuosity. Take away the distinction of the names of *Goshawk*, *Sparhawk* and *Falcon*, you'll find the very same thing. The violence of a *Whirlwind*, that roots up Trees, more resembles that of a *Storm*,
which

which raises disorders of another kind, than the objects to which it is compared. A *Lion*, whom hunger drives from his den; a *Lion* pursued by hunters; a *Lioness* furious and jealous of her whelps; a *Lion* against whom a whole village assembles, and who for all that retires with pride and indignation: all this is a *Lion* differently represented, but still a *Lion*, which doth not afford us ideas different enough.

Sometimes Comparisons take us from objects that employ us most, by showing us another object, that makes an unseasonable diversion. I am ready to consider two Armies, that are drawn out to engage, and I employ all my thoughts to observe the behaviour, order and disposition of the Troops: on a sudden, I am transported to the *Shores of a Sea, which is swell'd by the fury of the winds*, and I am in more danger to behold shipwreck'd Vessels, than broken Battalions. These vast thoughts which the Sea affords me, efface the former. Another represents to me a *Mountain* or a *Forest all on fire*. Whither doth not the idea of such a burning carry one? If I were not a perfect master of my own thoughts, I might insensibly be led to the last universal conflagration. From this terrible burning, I am hurried to an image of *Lightning*; and these diversions so much take me off from the first image that employed me, that I lose entirely that of the Battle.

We think to embellish objects by comparing them to eternal, immense, infinite Beings; but in truth we lessen instead of advancing them. To say that a Woman is *as handsome as Madam MAZARIN*; is to praise her more, than if you compar'd her to the *Sun*: for the sublime and wonderful create esteem; the impossible and the fabulous destroy that very commendation, which they pretend to bestow.

Truth was not the inclination of the first Ages; an useful lye, and a lucky falsehood gave reputation

to impostors, and pleasure to the credulous. 'Twas the secret of the great and wise, to govern the simple ignorant herd. The vulgar, who paid a profound respect to mysterious errors, wou'd have despised naked truth, and 'twas thought a piece of prudence to cheat them. All their discourses were fitted to so advantageous a design; in which there was nothing to be seen but fictions, allegories, and similitudes; nothing appeared as it was in it self. Specious and rhetorical out-sides hid the truth of things; and comparisons too frequently used, hinder'd the Reader from minding the true objects, by amusing him with resemblances.

The genius of our Age is quite opposite to this spirit of Fables and false mysteries. We love plain truth; good sense has gain'd ground upon the illusions of fancy; and nothing satisfies us now-a-days, but solid Reason. To this alteration of humour, we may add that of knowledge; we have other notions of Nature, than the Antients had. The Heavens, that eternal mansion of so many Divinities, are nothing else with us, but an immense and fluid space. The same Sun shines still upon us; but we assign it another course; and instead of hastening to set in the Sea, it goes to enlighten another World. The earth, which was immoveable in the opinion of the Antients, now turns round in ours, and is not to be equal'd for the swiftness of its motion. In short, every thing is changed, Gods, Nature, Politicks, Manners, Humours, and Customs. Now is it to be supposed, that so many alterations should not produce a mighty change in our Writings?

If HOMER were now alive, he would undoubtedly write admirable Poems; but then he would fit them to the present Age. Our Poets make bad ones, because they model them by those of the Antients, and order them according to Rules, which are changed with things that time hath alter'd.

I know there are certain eternal rules, grounded upon good sense, built upon firm and solid Reason, that will always last : yet there are but few that bear this Character. Those that relate to the Manners, Affairs and Customs of the antient Greeks, make but a weak impression upon us at present. We may say of them as HORACE has said of words, they have their certain period and duration. Some die with old age ; *ita verborum interit ætas* : others perish with their Nation, as well as their maxims of Government, which subsist not after the Empire is dissolved. So 'tis plain, there are but very few, that have a right to prevail at all times ; and it would be ridiculous to regulate matters wholly new by Laws that are extinct. Poetry would do ill to exact from us, what Religion and Justice do not obtain.

To this servile and too much affected imitation, is owing the ill success of all our Poems. Our Poets had not genius enough to please without employing the Gods ; nor address to make a good use of what materials our Religion could afford them. Tied to the humour of Antiquity, but confined to the doctrines of this Age, they give the air of Mercury to our Angels, and that of the fabulous wonders of Paganism to our Miracles. This mixture of antient and modern, has made them succeed very ill. And we may say, that they neither know how to draw any advantage from their fictions, nor make a right use of our truths.

To conclude, the Poems of HOMER will always be a master-piece, but they are not a model always to be followed. They will form our judgment ; and our judgment will regulate the present disposition of things.



OF THE
W O N D E R F U L,

That is found in the POEMS of the
A N T I E N T S.

IF we consider the Wonderful in the Poems of Antiquity, divested of the fine thoughts, the strong passions, and the noble expressions with which the Works of the Poets are adorn'd; if we consider it, I say, destitute of all ornament, and come to examine it purely by it self, I am persuaded that to a man of good sense, it will appear no less ridiculous, than that of Knight-Errantry. Nay, the latter is in this regard the discreeter of the two, because it supposes all pernicious, dishonest, and base things done by the ministry of Devils and Magicians; whereas the Poets have left the most infamous exploits to the management of their Gods and Goddeses. Yet this hinders not but that Poems have been always admired, and Books of Chivalry ridiculed. The first are admired for the wit and knowledge we find in them; and the other despised for the absurdities they are fill'd with. The Wonderful in the Poems supports its fabulous extravagance by the Beauty of the discourse, and by an infinite number of useful discoveries that accompany it. That of Chivalry discredits even the foolish invention of its fable, by the ridiculousness of the Style in which it is written.

Be it how it will, the Wonderful in the Poems has begotten that of Knight-Errantry; and certain it is, that the Devils and Conjurers cause much less harm in this way of writing, than the Gods and their Ministers did in the former. The Goddess of Arts, of Knowledge, and Wisdom, inspires the bravest of all the Greeks with an ungovernable fury, and suffers him not to recover his senses she had taken from him, but only to make him capable of perceiving his folly, and by this means to kill himself out of meer shame and despair. The greatest and most prudent of the Goddesses favours scandalous Passions, and lends her assistance to carry on a criminal Amour. The same Goddess employs all sorts of Artifices to destroy a handful of innocent people, who by no means deserved her indignation. She thought it not enough to exhaust her own power, and that of the other Gods, whom she solicited to ruin ÆNEAS, but even corrupts the God of sleep to cast PALINURUS into a slumber, and so to order matters that he might drop into the Sea; this piece of treachery succeeded, and the poor Pilot perish'd in the waves.

There is not one of the Gods in these Poems, that does not bring the greatest misfortunes upon men, or hurry them on to the blackest actions. Nothing is so villainous here below, which is not executed by their order, or authoriz'd by their example: and this it was, that principally contributed to give birth to the Sect of the Epicureans, and afterwards to support it. EPICURUS, LUCRETIUS, and PETRONIUS, would rather make their Gods idle, and enjoy their immortal Nature in an uninterrupted tranquillity, than see them active, and cruelly employ'd in ruining ours.

Vol. II.

Z

Nay,

1 Ajax the Son of Telemach.

2 Juno in the Æneis.

Nay, EPICURUS by doing so, pretended he shew'd his great respect to the Gods; and from hence proceeded that saying which my Lord BACON so much admires: *Non Deos vulgi negare profanum, sed vulgi opiniones Diis applicare profanum*³.

Now I don't mean by this, that we are oblig'd to discard the Gods out of our Works, and much less from those of Poetry, where they seem to enter more naturally than any where else:

Ab Jove principium Musæ.

I am for introducing them as much as any man: but then I would have them bring their wisdom, justice and clemency along with them, and not appear, as we generally make them, like a pack of impostors and assassins. I would have them come with a conduct to regulate, and not with a disorder to confound every thing.

Perhaps it may be reply'd, that these extravagancies ought only to pass for fables and fictions, which belong to the jurisdiction of Poetry. But I wou'd fain know, what Art and Science in the world has the power to exclude good Sense? If we need only write in verse to be privileged in all extravagancies; for my part, I would never advise any man to meddle with prose, where he must immediately be pointed at for a coxcomb, if he leaves good sense and reason never so little behind him.

I wonder extremely, that the Antient Poets, were so scrupulous to preserve probability in the actions

³ *Diogenes Laertius has transmitted to us that saying of Epicurus. M. de St. Evremond quotes it according to the Translation of my Lord Bacon, Sermon. Fidel. cap. xvi. but this is more literal: Impius est, non is qui multitudinis Deos tollit; sed qui multitudinis opiniones Diis adhibet. Diog. Laert. Lib. x. §. 123.*

actions of men; and violated it after so abominable a manner, when they come to recount the actions of the Gods. Even those who have spoken of their Nature more soberly than the rest, could not forbear to speak extravagantly of their conduct. When they establish their Being, and their Attributes, they make them immortal, infinite, almighty, perfectly wise, and perfectly good. But at the very moment they set them a working, there is no weakness to which they don't make them stoop; there is no folly or wickedness which they don't make them commit.

We have two common Sayings, which appear to be directly opposite to one another, and yet I look upon both to be very probable. The one is, that *Poetry is the Language of the Gods*; the other, that *there is not such a fool in nature as a Poet*. Poetry, that expresses with force and vigour, those impetuous Passions that disturb mankind; that paints the wonders of the universe in lively expressions, does elevate things purely natural, as it were above nature, by the sublimity of its thoughts, and the magnificence of its discourse, which may justly enough be called *the Language of the Gods*. But when Poets come once to quit this noble field of passions and wonders, to speak of the Gods, they abandon themselves to the caprice of their own imagination, in matters which they do not understand; and their heat having no just ideas to govern it, instead of making themselves, as they vainly believe, wholly divine, they are in truth *the most extravagant fools in the World*. It will be no difficult matter to be convinced of this truth, if we consider that this absurd and fabulous Theology, is equally contrary to all notions of Religion, and all principles of good Sense. There have been some Philosophers that have founded Religion upon that knowledge which men may have of the Deity

by their natural Reason. There have been Law-givers too that have stiled themselves the interpreters of the will of Heaven, to establish a religious worship, which has not had reason to support it. But to make, as the Poets have done, a perpetual Commerce, a familiar Society, and if I may use the expression, a mixture of Men and Gods, against Religion and Reason, is certainly the boldest, and perhaps the most senseless thing that ever was.

It remains now to consider, whether the character of a Poem has virtue to rectify that of impiety and folly. Now, as I take it, we don't ascribe so much power to the secret force of any charm. That which is bad, is bad for good and all; that which is extravagant, can be made good sense in no respect. As for the reputation of the Poet, it rectifies nothing any more than the character of the Poem does. Discernment is a slave to no body. That which is effectually bad, is not at all the better for being found in the most celebrated Author: and that which is just and solid, is never the worse for coming from an indifferent hand. Amongst a hundred fine and lofty thoughts, a good judge will soon discover an extravagant one, which one's genius threw out when it was warm, and which too strong an imagination was able to maintain against unfixed reflections. On the other hand, in the course of an infinite number of extravagant things, this same judge will admire certain beauties, where the mind, in spite of its impetuosity, was just and regular.

The elevation of HOMER, and his other noble qualities, don't hinder me from taking notice of the false character of his Gods: and that agreeable and judicious equality of VIRGIL, that pleases all true judges, does not conceal from me the little merit of his ÆNEAS. If among so many noble

things which affect me in HOMER and VIRGIL, I cannot forbear to remark what is defective in them; so amongst those passages that displease me in LUCAN, either for being too flat, or weary me for being too far carried on; I cannot forbear to please my self in considering the just and true grandeur of his Heroes. I endeavour to relish every word in him, when he expresses the secret movements of CESAR at the sight of POMPEY's Head; and nothing escapes me in that inimitable Discourse of LABIENUS and CATO, where they debate whether they shall consult the Oracle of JUPITER AMMON, to know the destiny of the Commonwealth ⁴.

If all the antient Poets had spoken as worthily of the Oracles of their Gods, I should make no scruple to prefer them to the Divines and Philosophers of our time; and 'tis a passage that may serve for an example in this matter, to all succeeding Poets. One may see in the concourse of so many people that came to consult the Oracle of AMMON, what effects a publick opinion can produce, where zeal and superstition mingle together. One may see in LABIENUS, a pious sensible man, who to his respect for the Gods, joins that consideration and esteem we ought to preserve for true Virtue in good men. CATO is a religious, severe Philosopher, weaned from all vulgar opinions, who entertains those lofty thoughts of the Gods, which pure undebauched Reason, and a truly elevated wisdom can give us of them. Every thing here is Poetical, every thing here is consonant to sense and truth; it is not Poetical upon the score of any ridiculous fiction, or for some extravagant hyperbole, but for the daring greatness and majesty of the Language, and for the noble elevation of the discourse. 'Tis

Z 3

thus,

⁴ See Lucan's Pharsalia, Lib. ix.

thus, that Poetry is the language of the Gods, and that Poets are wise: and 'tis so much the greater wonder to find it in LUCAN, because it is neither to be met with in HOMER or VIRGIL!

*****!*****

A N

ELUCIDATION

Of what I said of the

Italian Musick.

I Have met with so bad treatment as to what concerns the Italians, that I am under a necessity of vindicating my self to persons whose approbation I might desire, and whose censure I might fear. I declare then, that after having heard SYMPHACE, BALLARINI, and BUZZOLINI with attention, and examin'd their singing with the small genius and skill that I am master of, I found they sung divinely well; and if I could hit upon terms that were beyond this expression, I would make use of them to add a greater value to their capacity.

I can make no certain judgment of the French. They put the Passions in too great a commotion; they disorder our affections so mightily, that we lose the liberty of judging, which others have left us, to find out the certainty of their merit in the exactness of our approbations.

The

¹ See above, pag. 177 and seqq.

The first institution of Musick was made to keep our Soul in a soft repose; or to restore it to its due situation, in case it was out of it. They, who from an equal knowledge of Manners and Singing, follow orders so usefully establish'd, deserve praise. The French have no manner of regard to those Principles: they inspire fear, pity, sorrow; they disquiet, agitate, and disturb when they please; they excite the Passions which others allay; they win the heart by a Charm which we might call a kind of seduction. Is your soul tender and sensible? Do you love to be touch'd? Hear ROCHOVAS, BAUMAVIEL, DUMENIL, those secret masters of the heart, who likewise study the grace and beauty of action, in order to make our eyes declare in their favour. But would you admire capacity, skill, and profoundness in difficult things; a facility of singing every thing without study, the art of adjusting the composition to one's voice, instead of accomodating one's voice to the intention of the composer? Would you admire an incredible length of breath for quavering, a surprizing glibness of the throat in running divisions? Hear SYPHACE, BELLARINI, and BUZZOLINI, who disdaining the false movements of the heart, address themselves to your noblest part, and conquer your most solid Reason.





A

L E T T E R

T O T H E

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

M A D A M,

I Am not so vain as to ask your approbation, and you have too much judgment to give it me; but since ill-humour accompanies exactness of judging, I intreat you, Madam, do not censure me generally upon every thing I say, nor condemn me for every thing I do. If I speak, I express my meaning ill; if I hold my tongue, I harbour a malicious thought; if I refuse to dispute, 'tis ignorance; if I do dispute, 'tis obstinacy or unfairness; if I agree to what is said, no body cares for my complaisance; if I am of a contrary opinion, never was such a contradictory man seen. When I produce good reasons, Madam hates arguers of the case: when I alledge examples, that is her aversion: with relation to what is past, I am a teller of old stories; as to the present, she ranks me among old dotards; and as to the future, an *Irish Prophet*¹ would be sooner credited than I.

As

¹ See Vol. I. pag. 189.

As all things have their seasons, Conversation ends, and Play begins, where, if I lose, I am the bubble ; if I win I am the sharper ; and if I leave off, a clown. If I have a mind to walk, I have the restlessness of youth ; and rest, to be sure, is the heaviness and drowsiness of my old Age. If I am yet animated with passion, I am call'd an old fool ; if Reason governs the inclinations of my mind, I am told that I am in love with nothing, and that no man's indifference was ever equal to mine. Contraries are equally disadvantageous to me ; when I intend to amend one thing which you were displeased withal, I do another thing quite contrary, and thereby displease you as much as before. In the condition I am now in, I dread, lest I should commit a mistake ; and am afraid, lest I should do right. You never forgive any of my errors ; you hate me when I am in the right ; and I am so unhappy as to be often the object of your hatred.

This, Madam, is the ordinary treatment I receive at your hands ; this is it, that makes me desire your absence. But by thinking of your peevish humours too much, I have not sufficiently reflected on your Charms, nor considered that the greatest of all misfortunes must be that of not seeing you, I have been able to tell you the pains I suffer when I am with you, but those which I feel when I am absent from you, are past expression. 'Tis not in the power of words to express my grief. *I cannot speak, Madam, but I die* ².

I have ended my Letter, Dying ; but the Virtue of your Charms is able to revive those whom your rigour has struck dead. The first thing I have to beg of you, Madam, is, that you would abate your severity and cruelty towards me, in the
new

² *A verse of Corneille.*

new Life that I am going to lead with you. Divide the severity of your justice; let part of it fall on M. VILLIERS; let not your Chaplain be without his share of it; nor let honest L O T escape for all her care about your Domestick affairs; let the Princes and the Nobility sometimes take part of the burthen upon them, that the Gentry may have some ease; and, in fine, Madam, let not me be the only person pitch'd upon to bear your anger and passion, to make way for your kindneses and civilities to others.



N O N



ON THE
M O R A L S
O F
E P I C U R U S:
T O T H E
M O D E R N L E O N T I U M.

YOU desire to be informed, whether I composed those *Reflections upon the Doctrine of Epicurus*, which are attributed to me: I might honour my self with them²; but I don't love to give my self a merit which I have no right to; for to deal ingenuously with you, they are not mine. I have a great disadvantage in these little Treatises, that are printed under my name. There are some good performances which I do not own, because they don't belong to me; and amongst my Writings, they have inserted abundance of impertinent things, which

¹ *Leontium, was an Athenian Lady, who hath been celebrated for her intrigues, and her knowledge of Philosophy, which she learn'd from Epicurus. By the MODERN LEONTIUM, M. de St. Evremond here means Madam L'Enclos. See the Life of M. de St. Evremond, in the year 1685.*

² *Those Reflections are inserted in the third Volume, among the best Pieces attributed to M. de St. Evremond.*

which I don't take the trouble to disown. At my Age, one hour of Life well managed is more considerable with me, than the concern of an indifferent Reputation. With what difficulty a man parts with Self-love? I quit it as an Author; I resume it as a Philosopher, finding a secret pleasure in neglecting what others so earnestly pursue.

The word *Pleasure* recalls EPICURUS into my mind; and makes me confess, that of all the Opinions of Philosophers concerning the sovereign Good, none appears to me so rational as his. It would be to no purpose to alledge here the reasons, that have been given a hundred times by the Epicureans; that the Love of Pleasure, and the avoiding of Grief, are the first and most natural motions, that are observed in men; that riches, power, honour, and virtue may contribute to our happiness: but that the sole enjoyment of Pleasure, is, to speak all, the single end to which our actions tend. 'Tis a thing clear enough of it self, and I am fully persuaded of it. At the same time I don't well know what this *Pleasure* of EPICURUS was; for I never saw learned Men so divided about any point, as they have been about the Morals of this Philosopher. Philosophers, and even some of his own Disciples, have exclaimed against him, as a sensual and lazy person, that never quitted his idleness but to make a debauch. All Sects have opposed his. Magistrates have looked upon his Doctrine to be prejudicial to the publick. CICERO, so just and so wise in his opinions; and PLUTARCH, so much esteemed for his judgment, have not been favourable to him. And as for the Christians, the ancient Fathers have made him pass for the greatest and most dangerous of impious persons. Thus I have shown you his enemies; now let us see who his Friends were.

METRO-

METRODORUS, HERMACHUS, MENECEUS, and many others that used to dispute with him; had as much veneration as friendship for his person. DIOGENES LAERTIUS could not write his Life with more advantage to his reputation than he has done: LUCRETIVS was his adorer; SENECA, as much an enemy as he was to his sect, hath mentioned him with praise. If some Cities have express'd an aversion for him, others have erected statues in his honour; and among the Christians, if the Fathers have cried him down, GASSENDUS and M. BERNIER do vindicate him.

In the midst of all these authorities, so opposite one to the other, what way is there to decide the controversy? Shall I say that EPICURUS is a corrupter of good Manners, upon the credit of a jealous Philosopher, or a discontented Disciple, who perhaps suffer'd himself to be blindly led by his own resentments, for some imagin'd injury? Besides, since 'tis evident that EPICURUS aimed to ruin the common received opinion about Providence, and the Immortality of the Soul, cannot I easily persuade my self that the world appear'd against a doctrine that gave so much scandal; and that they defamed the life of the Philosopher, on purpose to discredit his opinions with more authority? But if I am unwilling to receive all that his enemies and his rivals have published of him, so I do not easily believe what his defenders dare say. I don't think that he had a design to introduce a *Pleasure* more severe than the Virtue of the Stoicks. This jealousy of austerity seems to me extravagant in a voluptuous Philosopher, take his Pleasure in what sense you please. A pretty mystery this, to declaim against a Virtue that divests a wise man of his senses, to establish a Pleasure that affords him no motion! The wise Man of the Stoicks is a virtuous Insensible; that of the Epicureans a voluptuous

tuous Immoveable : the first is in pain without pain ; the second tastes pleasure without pleasure. What reason had a Philosopher, who did not believe the immortality of the soul, to mortify the senses ? why should he put a divorce between two parts, composed of the same matter, that ought to find their advantage in the mutual concord and union of their pleasures ? I pardon in our Religious men the sad singularity of eating nothing but Herbs, since they think to obtain eternal happiness by these austerities : but that a Philosopher, who knows no other good things than those of this world ; that the Doctor of Pleasure should regale himself with bread and water to arrive at the sovereign happiness of life, is what my little understanding cannot comprehend. If EPICURUS was such a man, I admire that they don't make his pleasure center in Death ; for if we consider the misery of life, his chiefest good should have been to get rid of it. Believe me, if HORACE and PETRONIUS had imagin'd him to have been such a one as he is described, they would not have chosen him to be their master in the science of Pleasures.

As for what some people pretend of his great piety towards the Gods, 'tis no less ridiculous than the mortification of his senses. Those idle Gods from whom he had nothing to hope or fear ; those impotent beings did not merit the trouble of his worship : and let not people say, that he went to the Temples, for fear of drawing the Magistrates upon him, and scandalizing his Citizens ; for he had much less scandaliz'd them by not assisting at their Sacrifices, than he offended them by his Writings, which destroyed the Gods establish'd in the world, or at least ruined that confidence the people had in their protection.

But now, some one will say to me, What think you of EPICURUS? you believe neither his friends nor his enemies; his adversaries nor his defenders; what then is your judgment of him? I'm of opinion, that EPICURUS was a very wise Philosopher, who, according to different times and occasions, loved pleasure in repose, or pleasure in motion; and that this different Pleasure has occasion'd the different reputation he has found in the world. TIMOCRATES and his other enemies, have charg'd him with sensual pleasures; those that have defended him, talk of nothing but of spiritual pleasures. The former accuse him of expensive banquets, and I am persuaded that the accusation is well grounded: when the latter value him for his eating some little morsels of cheese, in order to make better cheer than usual, I believe they don't want reason. When one side says, that he argued with LEONTIUM, they say true: when the other affirms, that he diverted himself with her, they don't misrepresent him. *There is a time to laugh, and a time to weep*, according to SOLOMON; a time to be sober, and a time to be sensual, according to EPICURUS. Besides a voluptuous man is not equally so all his life. In Religion, the greatest Libertine becomes sometimes the most devout: in the study of Wisdom, the most indulgent to pleasure, is sometimes the most severe. As for me, I look otherwise upon EPICURUS in youth and health, than in old age and sickness.

Indolence and tranquillity, that happiness of idle people and sick persons, cannot be better express'd, than they are in his writings: sensual Pleasure is no less explained in that formal passage which CICERO expressly alledges³. I know, indeed, that all imaginable care has been taken to destroy its credit,

³ Tuscul. Disput. Lib. III. §. 18.

dit, and to invalidate it : but are mere conjectures to be compared with the testimony of C I C E R O, who was so well acquainted with the Philosophers of Greece, and their opinions ? It were much better to ascribe to the inconstancy of human nature, the inequality of our minds. Where is a man so uniform as to have nothing unequal, and contradictory in his discourse and actions ? S O L O M O N deserves the name of *Wise*, at least as much as E P I C U R U S, and was equally mistaken in his opinions and conduct. M O N T A I G N E, when he was a young man, believed that our thoughts ought to be eternally fixed upon Death, that we might be prepared for it : when he came to be old, he *recanted*, and would have us suffer our selves to be sweetly conducted by Nature, that will sufficiently teach us to die.

M. B E R N I E R, that great favourer of E P I C U R U S, doth now confess, that *after he has studied Philosophy fifty years, he doubts even of those things that he had believed to be the most certain* ⁴. All objects have different faces, and our mind, which is in a continual motion, looks upon them differently as it does consider them ; so that, if I may be allow'd the expression, we have nothing but new aspects, while we think we enjoy new discoveries. Besides, age brings great alterations in our humour, and by the alteration of humour, is very often introduced that of our opinions. To this we may add, that the pleasures of the senses sometimes make us disrelish the satisfaction of the mind, as too jejune and naked ; and that the nice and refined satisfactions of the mind, despise in their turn the pleasures of the senses, as too gross. So we ought not to be surprized, that, in so great a
diversity

⁴ Abregé de la Philosophie de Gassendi, *Tom. II. pag. 379, of the edition printed at Lyons in 1684.*

diversity of prospects and motions, EPICURUS, who writ more than any Philosopher, should say the same thing in a different manner, according as he might have different thoughts and notions of it.

What occasion is there for this general argument, to shew that he had no aversion to all sorts of Pleasures? If you consider his commerce with the Ladies, you'll scarce believe that he spent so much time with LEONTIUM and THEMISTA, to do nothing but talk of Philosophy with them. But if he loved the enjoyment of them as a voluptuous person, he manag'd himself prudently; and, as he was indulgent to the motions of nature, so he disliked that any violence should be offered to it; not always reckoning Chastity for a virtue, but always accounting Luxury a vice. He would have sobriety regulate the appetite, and that the present meal should never hurt that which was to succeed: *sic præsentibus voluptatibus utaris, ut futuris non noceas.* He disengaged Pleasures from the uneasiness that precede, and the distaste that follows them. When he fell into infirmities and pains, he fixed the sovereign Good in Indolence: wisely, in my opinion, if we consider the condition he was then in; for the cessation of pain is the happiness of those that languish under it. As for the Tranquillity of Mind, which composed the other part of his happiness, 'tis nothing but an exemption from trouble: but he who can no longer have agreeable motions, is happy, if he can preserve himself from the vexations of pain.

After all I have said upon this article, I conclude, that Indolence and Repose ought to make the sovereign Good of EPICURUS, when he was infirm and languishing: but for a man who is in a condition to taste Pleasure, I'm of opinion that health shows it self by something more lively than a bare Indolence; as a good disposition of the soul requires

something more animated than a peaceable state. We live in the midst of an infinite number of Goods and Evils, and with senses capable of being affected with the one, and tormented with the other: without very much Philosophy, a little reason will make us relish good things as deliciously as possible, and instruct us to bear the bad with all the patience we can.



O F

R E T I R E M E N T.

THere's nothing more common with old Men, than to desire a Retirement, and nothing so rare with them as not to repent it, when they are once retir'd. Their souls, that are in too great a subjection to their humours, are disgusted with the world for their own tiresomeness; for scarce have they quitted this false object of their misfortune, but they are as angry with solitude, as they were with the world, being uneasy at themselves, where nothing but themselves can give them any uneasiness.

An essential reason that obliges us to withdraw our selves out of the World when we are old, is to prevent that ridicule and contempt to which age generally exposes us. If we quit the World in good time, they will still preserve the idea of that merit, which we had there. If we tarry too long in it, our defects will lie open; and what we are then, will efface the memory of what we were. Besides, 'tis a shame for a person of honour to drag about
him

him the infirmities of age at the Court, where the end of his services occasions that of his interest.

Nature teaches us to reassume our liberty, when we have nothing more to hope from fortune. 'Tis what a sense of decency, what the care of our reputation, what good manners, and nature it self require from us. Nor is this all, for the world has likewise a right to demand the same thing of us: Its commerce furnish'd us with pleasures while we were capable of relishing 'em : and it would be ingratitude to be a burden to it, when we can give it nothing but disgust.

As for my self, I am fully resolved to live in a Convent, or a Desert, rather than to give my friends an occasion to pity me, or to furnish those that are not so, with a subject for their malicious mirth and raillery. But the mischief is, that a man is not sensible when he becomes either weak or ridiculous. It is not enough to know that we are gone for good and all ; but we ought to be the first that perceive our selves to be upon the decline, and like prudent men, to prevent the publick knowledge of this change.

Not that every alteration that age brings along with it, ought to inspire us with the resolution of retiring. I own, we lose a great deal by growing old ; but amongst the losses we sustain, some of them are recompens'd by considerable advantages. If after I have lost my Passions, the Affections continue with me still ; I shall find less inquietude in my pleasures, and more discretion in the conduct of my life in relation to the world. If my Imagination decays, I shall not please so much sometimes ; but then I shall be infinitely less troublesom for the general part. If I quit the crowd for a select company, my thoughts will be more compos'd. If I come from a large acquaintance to the conversation

of a few ; 'tis because I know how to make a better choice.

Besides, 'tis to be consider'd, that if we change, we do it amongst people that change as well as our selves : men of equal infirmities, or at least subject to the very same. Therefore I shall not be at all ashamed to search in their presence some relief against the weakness of Age ; nor shall I be afraid to supply by art, what begins to fail me by nature. A nicer precaution against the injury of time, a more careful management of a health that daily becomes more feeble, cannot scandalize any man of sense, and we ought not to trouble our selves with those that are not so.

To say the truth, that which displeases in old people, is not too affected a care of their own preservation. We should easily forgive them every thing that relates to themselves, if they had but the same consideration for others. But the Authority they assume, is full of injustice and indiscretion ; for they preposterously thwart the inclinations even of those that bear the most with their infirmities. Their long course of life, it seems, has untaught them how to converse with mankind ; for they shew nothing but a spirit of Moroseness, Austerity, and Contradiction, to those very persons from whom they exact affability, docility, and obedience. All that they themselves do, they imagine to be virtuous ; and place among vices every thing that lies out of their power. And as they are constrain'd to follow Nature where she is tiresome and offensive, they would have others oppose what is sweet and agreeable in her.

There is no part of our life wherein we ought to study our own Humour with more application than in old age ; for it is never so difficult to be discover'd as then. An impetuous young fellow has a hundred returns, when he is dissatisfied with
his

his Extravagancies : but old people devote themselves to their Humour as if it was a virtue ; and take pleasure in their own defects, because they carry a false resemblance of the most commendable qualities. In effect, as they grow more difficult, they vainly imagine that they become more delicate. They take up an aversion to Pleasure, believing that they are justly opposing the current of Vice. A serious air passes with them for judgment ; phlegm for wisdom : and hence proceeds that supercilious authority they allow themselves to censure every thing : Spleen supplying the place of indignation against sin ; and Gravity of sufficiency.

The only sure remedy when we are come to this pass, is to consult our Reason in the intervals, when she is disengag'd from our humour ; and to take a resolution to conceal our defects from the sight of the world. 'Tis all that our wisdom can do at this juncture to hide them, and it would be a superfluous labour to endeavour wholly to get clear of them. 'Tis at this point of our Life that we ought to assign some time between it and Death, and to chuse a convenient place to pass it in Devotion if possible, at least with Prudence ; either with a devotion that gives us confidence, or with reason that promises us repose. When our Reason, which qualified us for the world, is, if I may use the expression, worn out with long using, a wise man forms another out of it to serve him in his Retreat, which of ridiculous fools, as we were growing in conversation, makes us truly wise in respect of our selves.

Of all the Retreats that a man can chuse when he is Old, I should infinitely prefer that of a Convent to all the rest, if their Rules were less severe. 'Tis certain that old age shuns a crowd, out of a nice and retired humour, that cannot endure to be either importun'd or tired ; and yet it avoids solitude

with greater diligence, where it becomes a prey to its own black disquietudes, or to fullen vexatious imaginations. The only remaining relief against all this, is the Conversation of a virtuous Society : now, what Society can better agree with it than a religious one, where one would think, all manner of human helps should be afforded, with more charity than elsewhere, and where their vows should be united to demand those succours from heaven, which cannot reasonably be expected from men.

It is as natural for old people to take up with Devotion, as it is ordinary with young men to abandon themselves to Pleasures. In the latter, Nature full charg'd, throws out of her self her superfluity of vigour, hunting after voluptuousness in external Objects : in the others, languishing Nature seeks in God what she has lost, and adheres more closely to him, to provide for her self a kind of resource in her decay. Thus the same spirit that leads to Society in our wants, conducts us to God in our languishings ; and if Convents were instituted as they ought to be, we should find in the same place both the support of Heaven, and the assistance of Men : but after the manner they are settled, instead of an alleviation of our miseries, we find there the hardship of a blind obedience, either in the performance of unprofitable things, or in the forbearance of innocent ones. We find there an ordinary sacrifice of Reason ; Laws more difficult to be observ'd than the divine and political ; Ordinances scandalously broke by Libertines, and impatiently borne by the most submissive.

I confess, we meet sometimes with some religious persons of an inestimable merit ; such as knew the Vanities of the world which they have quitted ; and the grimace of that kind of life which they have embrac'd. These are truly virtuous and devout men, who refine the dictates of Morality by those
of

of Piety. They live not only exempt from the perturbation of passions, but enjoy a most admirable serenity of mind ; and are more happy in desiring nothing, than the greatest Monarchs in possessing all. Such examples are indeed very rare : and the virtue of those religious persons is more to be admir'd, than their condition to be embraced.

For my part, I would never advise a Gentleman to engage in such obligations, wherein all the rights of one's will are generally lost and swallow'd up. The pains which a man would willingly undergo, is made necessary ; the sin he designs to avoid, must be shun'd by injunction, and the good which he would do, is to be pursu'd by constraint. Common slavery goes no farther than to force us to what we are unwilling to do : that of Convents lays a necessity upon us, even in things that we are willing to perform.

The late Queen of Portugal¹, who was as capable to manage her own conduct in tranquillity, as to govern a state in a storm, had the fancy to turn Nun, upon her resigning the Government to her Son² : but after having examin'd the rules of all the religious orders, with as much care as judgment, she found none that allow'd either the Body the necessary conveniences of Life, or the Mind a reasonable satisfaction. 'Tis certain, that the idea of a Convent is agreeable to one who seeks innocence and repose ; but 'tis a hard matter to find there the contentment one fancied. If he does, which happens very rarely, he does not enjoy it long ; and the best caution one can use against entering into a Monastery, is to consider that the generality of

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those

¹ *Luisa-Francisca de Gusman, Daughter to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and Wife to Don Juan Duke of Bragança, who afterwards became King of Portugal. She died the 18th of February 1666.*

² *Don Alphonso.*

those religious persons continue there with regret, and get out from thence, when they can, with joy.

I could wish we had establish'd Societies, where Gentlemen might commodiously retire, after they have done the publick all the service they were able. When they were once enter'd here, whether out of a consideration of their future state, a dislike of the World, or a desire of Tranquillity, after so many different agitations of fortune, they might taste the delight of a pious Retreat, and the innocent pleasure of virtuous and agreeable conversation: but in this place of repose, I would have no other Rules than those of Christianity, which are generally receiv'd every where. And indeed, we have ills enough to suffer, and sins to commit, without creating new torments, and new crimes, by new Institutions. 'Tis a piece of folly, to seek far from Court, a Retreat where a man will live with more hardship, and damn himself with more ease, than in the conversation of men.

I hate the austerity of those, who, to enlarge duty, leave no room for good-will: they make all center in the necessity of obeying, without any other reason, than constantly to exercise our obedience; and, because they still delight in enjoying their power. Now, I don't like subjection to their fancy; and am only for docility to a wise and discreet conduct. It is not reasonable, that the small remainder of liberty, which Nature preserves from the laws of Politicks and Religion, should be wholly lost in the Institutions of these new Legislators; and that persons who enter a Monastery, thro' the notion of ease and repose, should find nothing there but slavery and pain.

As for my self, were I in such a place, I would freely make shift without delights, at an age when a man's relish of pleasures is, as it were, extinguish'd; but then I would have all conveniences,

at

at a time when we more sensibly feel whatever offends us, as in proportion we become less nice in the pursuit of what pleases us, or are less tender in relation to what affects us. These conveniences, desirable in old Age, ought to be as far remov'd from plenty, that causes perplexity, as from want, which creates anxiety. To explain my thoughts more clearly, I would have in a Convent, a cleanly and well-manag'd frugality; where God should not be look'd upon as a morose Master, who forbids agreeable things, because they are pleasing; but where nothing should please sound minds, but what's just, or entirely innocent.

When Monsieur FOUQUET was in prison, the Mareschal DE CLEREMBAUT had his head full of these thoughts about Retirement. "How
 " happy might a Man live, *said he*, in a Society,
 " where he could divest fortune of that jurisdiction
 " she pretends to have over him! We sacrifice to
 " this fortune, our estates, our repose, our years,
 " perhaps unprofitably; and if we arrive to possess
 " its favours, we purchase the short-liv'd enjoy-
 " ment, sometimes at the expence of our liberty,
 " and sometimes of our lives. But, suppose all
 " our greatness should continue as long as we liv'd,
 " yet it would at least expire with our selves. And
 " what use of their Grandeur have those great
 " Favourites made, who never beheld the course
 " of their fortune interrupted? Don't they seem
 " to have acquir'd this mighty stock of glory, and
 " to have heap'd these prodigious riches for no
 " other end, than to make themselves more sen-
 " sible of the torment of being neither able to quit
 " nor keep them?" This was his usual discourse for a whole month we were together; and that agreeable Courtier, whose conversation was the nicest delight his friends enjoy'd, suffer'd himself to
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be entirely possess'd with this train of thoughts, sometimes judicious, but always melancholy.

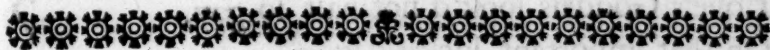
I confess there is a certain time when the wisest action we can do, is to quit the World: but as fully persuaded as I am of this truth, I should infinitely sooner be directed by Nature to retirement, than by my Reason. 'Tis by the impulse of the former, that in the midst of the World, I live now after such a fashion, as if I were retir'd out of it. I still continue in it, as far as I seek what pleases me; and am still out of it, as far as I avoid whatever incommodes me there. Every day I steal away from acquaintances that weary, and conversations that tire me. Every day I entertain my self in a sweet Commerce with my Friends, and find the most sensible pleasure in their company.

After my way of living, I neither enjoy a full Society, nor a perfect Retirement. 'Tis only an innocent confining of my self to those delights, which best agree with my inclinations. Disgusted with gross Vice, and offended by the practice of too rigid Virtue, I possess all those harmless pleasures that are most suitable to the repose of old Age, and affect me in proportion to what I am capable of relishing with satisfaction.

When we approach our fatal Urn,
And Life's decreasing lamp does feebly burn,
Nature to innocence inclin'd,
Pursues the pleasures of the mind:
And she, whose fierce impetuous heat
Fir'd ev'ry vein, now seeks a blest Retreat.
'Tis true, when Love's no more,
Our brightest Days are o'er;

But

But when our scorching Noon is past,
Soft Ev'ning's gentler light succeeds at last;
Then gladly we forget th' intemperate blaze,
Reason prevails o'er rage, and solid judgment sways.



A
L E T T E R
O F
M. DE LA FONTAINE
T O T H E
DUTCHESS OF BOUILLON.

M A D A M,

WE begin here to murmur against the English, for detaining you so long among them. 'Tis my proposal, that they shall surrender you to France, before the end of Autumn; and that we give them, by way of exchange, two or three Isles in the Ocean. If nothing but my own private satisfaction were concern'd in this matter, I should not grudge to give up the Ocean it self to them: but after all, perhaps we have more reason to complain of your Sister, than of England. 'Tis not

¹ The Dutches of Bouillon was Sister to the Dutches of Mazarin. This Letter was written in September 1687.

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not in our power to part with Madam MAZARIN, whenever we please. You are both of you encompass'd with every thing that makes the rest of the World be easily forgotten; I mean with enchantments and graces of all kinds:

Love's Goddess look'd not half so gay,
On that important lucky day,
When Beauty's prize she bore away:
Tho she appear'd in all her pride,
With Cupid's dancing by her side.
Now should the same dispute arise,
The universal language of all eyes
To you wou'd soon adjudge the prize.
The Paphian Shepherds boast in vain,
Of VENUS, and her gaudy train,
But who cou'd not in Paphos reign?
Where e'er you please your course to bend,
Pleasure, Mirth, and Love attend.
To some Sarmatian quarter go,
Cover'd with everlasting Snow;
Where balmy Zephires never yet did blow;
The face of Nature strait will smile,
Unbidden grass will cloath the wandring soil:
And where your steps the naked surface greet,
Roses spring up to kiss your feet.

I am inform'd that your Highness is admired by all England for your wit, your behaviour, and a thousand other qualities that charm them. This is so much the more glorious for you, because the English are not the readiest people in the world to admire Foreigners. I have only observed that they know true merit, and are pleas'd with it.

Your

Your Philosopher was exceedingly surpriz'd, when he was told that DESCARTES was not the inventor of this System, which we call *the Machine of Animals*; but that a Spaniard had discover'd it before him *. Tho he had not receiv'd the least proof of this matter of fact, yet for all that I should easily believe it; for I know of none but a Spaniard, that is able to build such a Castle in the air as this. So I discover every day some opinion or other of DESCARTES scatter'd up and down in the Writings of the Antients; and particularly this, that there are no real *Colours* in the universe: they are only so many different effects of light upon a different superficies. Adieu now to the lilies and roses of our AMYNTAS. There is no such thing as a white skin, or black hair: our passion has nothing for its foundation but a body without Colours: and after all this, shall I make Verses upon the principal Beauty of Women?

Those Gentleman that don't sufficiently know how far your Highness's knowledge reaches, and the desire you have to be capable of understanding every thing, without any other trouble, than only hearing it discours'd of at your table; will perhaps call my judgment in question, for entertaining you thus with matters of Philosophy: but I must inform them that every subject suits with your capacity, as doth every Book, provided it be a good one.

No Writers are to you unknown,
Nor subjects that they write upon.
You hear each syllable they say,
While with your Birds and Dogs you play.

Than

* See M. Bayle's Dictionary in the Article of Pereira.

Than the fam'd Roman you do more,
Who dictated at once to four.

This same worthy person, as I take it, was JULIUS CESAR, who, as we read, made four several dispatches all at once, upon four different subjects. You are nothing inferior to him in this respect; and I remember, that as I was a reading to you some Verses one morning, I found you very attentive at the same time, to what I read, and to three quarrels of your Dogs. 'Tis true, they were ready to strangle one another: JUPITER *the Reconciler*, could not so happily have accommodated this affair. Let people judge by this, Madam, what a comprehensive genius you have, and how far your penetration may reach, when it is only employ'd upon one subject. You pass your judgment upon a thousand sorts of Works, and your judgment is never in the wrong.

To you the serious and the gay,
To you the tender and sublime,
Their humble adorations pay,
The sov'reign judge of Prose and Rhime.
Fable and Hist'ry to you sue;
But what can Fable do for you?
The Rev'rend Bards of Antient Rome,
With joy to your Tribunal come:
And all that France has seen of late,
From your decisive Vote receives its fate.
You nothing want t' increase your store,
And Phœbus cannot give you more.

Thus

Thus 'mong the numerous crowds that sue,
 And press to make their Court to you;
 ANACREON shall in person come,
 From your fair lips to take his doom.
 WALLER, ST. EVREMOND, and I,
 Will join to keep you company.
 Who wou'd ANACREON turn away,
 Always youthful, always gay?
 Or who wou'd e'er refuse to see
 WALLER, ST. EVREMOND, and Me?

Tho his resistless power to show,
 Time on their heads has showr'd down snow:
 What Bards, in great APOLLO's quire
 Can boast a more enlivening fire?
 What Muse with easier plenty flows
 Than ours, or fewer wrinkles shews?

Let Jansenists, long used to preach,
 Their dull and useless Maxims teach;
 You'll still ANACREON's Lyre esteem,
 And such as strive to write like him:
 You, to whose penetrating Wit
 All Authors chearfully submit.

Now I have mention'd ANACREON, I am almost in mind to invoke his Ghost; but upon second thoughts, I think it will be better to raise him up for good and all. To effect this, I will find out some Gymnosophist, I mean one of those Gentlemen whom APOLLONIUS TYANEUS went to see. He learnt so many fine things of them, that he rais'd a young Woman from the dead. I shall

shall raise an old Poet. You, and Madam MAZARIN, shall call us together. We will meet in England, Mr. WALLER, Monsieur DE ST. EVREMOND, the merry old Greek, and my self. Do you think, Madam, 'tis possible to find four Poets better match'd together? What a merry fight will it be to see us four Bards, who make up at least three hundred Years between us,

Our heads with rosy Chaplets crown'd,
Dance and trip it on the ground,
In grateful Hymns and praises join,
To celebrate the God of Wine.

After such a meeting, and when I have sent ANACREON back to the Elysian Fields, I will demand of you my audience of leave. 'Tis convenient, that before this, I see five or six English Gentlemen, and as many English Ladies: (if report speaks true, the latter are richly worth the seeing). I will put our Ambassadour³ in mind of the new Street Des Petits-Champs, and of the devotion I have always had for him. I will desire him, as also Monsieur DE BONREPAUX⁴, to honour me with a Dispatch. Thus Madam, I have told you almost all the business that will take me up in England. I had also framed a design to convert Madam HERVART, Madam DE GOUVERNET, and my Lady ELAND; because they are persons I exceedingly honour: but I am inform'd, that they are not yet in a disposition to be wrought upon; and

³ Monsieur de Barillon, who was the French King's Ambassadour in England.

⁴ He had been sent to King James to negotiate some Affairs with him.

and I, Madam, like PERRIN DANDIN⁵, am just good for nothing, till both parties are weary of contesting longer. There's one thing indeed, I should desire above all things in the world, which is, that you would procure me the honour to pay my devoirs to the King⁶, but I dare not flatter myself of that happiness. He's so deserving a Monarch, that it's worth any man's while to cross the Sea on purpose to see him; so great a passion he expresses for glory, and so many royal qualities is he master of, which recommend a Prince. There are but few that possess the former of these talents, tho' those who are placed in so eminent a post, ought never to be without it.

True grandeur, and the art to reign,
Are no wild phantoms of the brain.
This Britain's active Monarch shows,
Whose life no lazy moments knows,
And scorns inglorious repose.
His busy genius, like the soul,
Inspires and animates the whole.
While happy Albion, by his care,
Does wealth, and peace, and plenty share.
Not Lovers run with hastier feet,
Their charming Mistresses to meet,
Than condescending JAMES does strive
Safety to all, and ease to give.
Thus his renown he does advance,
But the fair model took from France.
He traces LEWIS, whose vast soul
Has made him fam'd from pole to pole :

Vol. II.

B b

Whose

⁵ See Rabelais, Book iii. Chap. 39.

⁶ King James II.

Whose Conquests and exploits divine,
 Will in all future Annals shine.
 Let not my Muse this Theme profane,
 But to her sheep return again.

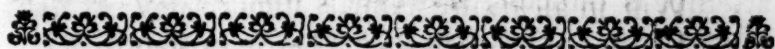
These *Sheep*, Madam, under favour, are your Highness and Madam MAZARIN. And here I have a proper opportunity to make her Panegyrick in order to join it with yours; but as these sorts of parallels are dangerous things, I am of opinion, 'twill be much better to let it alone.

Like Sisters you love, and the sovereign sway
 Between you divide, while your subjects obey:
 But I'll no dispute about preference raise,
 Since nothing's so nice to be parted as praise.
 Were TULLY now living, whose eloquent vein
 Did the hearts of the people and Senators gain,
 His Rhet'rick would fail in such matters as these,
 Two Heroes, two Wits, and two Beauties to please.

I am with a profound Respect, &c.



A N



A N

A N S W E R

B Y

M. DE ST. EVREMOND,

T O T H E

L E T T E R

*Of Monsieur DE LA FONTAINE
To the Dutcheſs of BOUILLON.*

IF you had been as ſenſibly touched with the merits of Madam DE BOUILLON, as we are charm'd by them, you had certainly accompanied her into England, where you would have found ſeveral Ladies that know you as well by your Works, as Madam DE LA SABLIERE knows you by your Converſation. They have not had the pleaſure of ſeeing you, which they ſo earneſtly deſired; but then they have had the ſatisfaction of reading your Letter, that has Gallantry and Wit enough to make even VOITURE himſelf jealous, were he now alive. Madam DE BOUILLON, Madam MAZARIN, and the Ambaſſador, were reſolved that

I should make some sort of an Answer to it. The attempt is difficult, however I will do my best to obey them.

Kings in religious silence I'll adore,
 How can the Muse increase their store?
 And in those living images of Jove,
 What can she else but laughter move?
 To think that we a Monarch raise
 By stale hyperbole's, and borrow'd praise;
 'Tis to depress the sacred Theme,
 'Tis not to praise, but to blaspheme.
 Their laws I'll chearfully obey,
 And to their wills submission pay;
 But more than this, what need I say?
 Their early fame, without my toil,
 Has pass'd the Ganges, and the Nile:
 And visited dull barb'rous climes,
 Unknown to Poetry and rhimes:
 Deaf to the trifles we rehearse,
 They scorn the tribute of our Verse.

Madam DE BOUILLON may be very well without my prose, after she has read the handsome Panegyrick which you sent her. However, I cannot forbear to say, that there are inimitable graces in every thing she does, and in every thing she says; that she is no less happy in her acquired, than natural endowments; and that her knowledge is equal to her other charms. In her ordinary Conversation, she always disputes with wit; and often (to my shame I own it) with reason; but a reason so lively, that indifferent judges take it for passion, and even the nicest would be hardly able to distinguish

stinguish it from anger in any person less amiable than her self.

I will pass over in silence the chapter of Madam MAZARIN, like that of the Kings, and content my self to adore her in secret. Endeavour, Sir, for all you are so great a Poet, to form the brightest idea of Beauty to your self, and in spite of the utmost efforts of your wit, you will be ashamed of the dulness of your imagination, when you behold a person so admirable.

Give o'er ye Sons of art give o'er,
The radiant subject prosecute no more,
The most exalted things you teach,
Cannot her least perfections reach.
Tall metaphors in vain you chuse,
In vain the gaudiest figures use:
You only flatter Titan's ray,
When you compare it to her brighter day.

Oh! beauteous HELEN, Sparta's pride!
Quit not old Lethe's peaceful side,
Where your majestick shade does reign:
'Twou'd but, alas! increase your pain,
If you the bright HORTENSIA saw,
To all mankind prescribing law.

Should Heaven your former Charms restore,
And send you to the world once more,
You'd curse the Sun, and hate the light,
That brought HORTENSIA to your sight.

In antient night's dark Realms below,
Where the dull streams forget to flow,

You may beguile the lazy hours,
 With Fights, Adventures, and Amours ;
 And how great HECTOR fought may tell,
 And how the dire ACHILLES fell.
 Those old Romantick Tales of Troy
 May give diversion, tho they give no joy.

But what strange tempests in your soul must
 rise,
 To see HORTENSIA bear the prize !
 To see her glitt'ring on the plain,
 Command the heart of every swain !
 While you possess'd by black despair,
 To rev'rend HOMER must repair,
 And some Dutch Author's works turn o'er,
 To find those Graces that are now no more.

Oh beauteous HELEN ! Sparta's pride !
 Quit not old Lethe's peaceful side.
 Content near peaceful Lethe dwell,
 Content with Empire, tho in Hell.

And ye fam'd Beauties of the Seine,
 Who in HORTENSIA's absence reign,
 Join to prevent her coming home :
 Whene'er she touches Gallia's shore,
 Your swains will visit you no more,
 But to her fairer Altar come.

“ What means this rambling stuff, you cry,
 “ HELEN and *Lethe*, *Greece*, and *Troy*.
 “ This frequent shifting of the scene,
 “ Of Earth and Hell, what does it mean ?

Oh

Oh FONTAINE ! if HORTENSIA's praise
you'll sing,

The boldest fable with you bring :
Low common truths her charms impair ;
From vulgar incense she will fly :
For godlike Heroes, and the godlike Fair,
Fiction it self can't soar too high.

The solidity of my Lord Ambassador, has made him very indifferent to all praises : but whatever rigour he shews to his own merit ; however severe he is to himself, he cannot but be secretly pleased with what you have writ in his favour. I could wish my Letter would be so happy as to have the same success with you.

All the true wisdom you possess,
That helps to make life's burden less :
Join'd with the solid force of age,
The fire of youth, but not its rage.

Having mention'd your Wit, I am obliged to say something of your Morals.

With chearful steps to follow fate,
And scorn the tinsel splendour of the great ;
That painted meteor to despise,
Which only sots call Wit, and coxcombs prize ;
In Verse and Musick, Wine and Play,
To pass an inoffensive life away ;
Makes you Death's bitter draught defy ;
By living thus, you learn with ease to die.

Mr. WALLER, whose loss we so much regret, preserv'd the flame and vigour of his wit to the eighty second year of his age¹.

While gloomy damps my soul oppress'd,
With scarce a glimpse of comfort bless'd,
Thus to my self I sighing cry'd:
With WALLER every Muse had dy'd,
Had not FONTAINE his room supply'd.

}

Oh second ORPHEUS! whose prevailing art
Can soften PLUTO's iron heart,
Now all the charms of harmony employ,
Now all your lyrick forces try,
And from those dreary mansions WALLER call
Whither resistless fate will send us all.

But we are allowed to ask these sorts of consolations no where but in Poetry: we know to our grief, that no merit whatever can exempt men from the fatal necessity of dying; and that no charm, no prayer, no sorrow, has efficacy enough to restore them to the world, when once they are gone out of it.

Cou'd Virtue its possessors save,
Or Wit exempt us from the grave,
WALLER wou'd still enjoy the light,
And bless Britannia with his sight:
WALLER, in whom PETRONIUS liv'd again,
The nicest judge of Pleasure and of Men.

I

¹ Mr. Waller died the 21st of October 1687. He was born the 3^d of March 1605.

M. DE ST. EVREMOND. 393

I pass now from my regrets for Mr. WALLER'S
Muse, to my good wishes for yours.

Long may your Muse, enjoying happy ease,
The wond'ring world instruct and please :
May she see many rolling years,
Fresh as the laurel wreath she wears.

But 'tis not reasonable that I should make so
many vows for others, without putting up a short
petition for my self.

Since Beauty's Queen does not disdain
The service of my slender vein,
Let my submission to her will,
The place of other merits fill.
Let her bright eyes that have so long
Preserv'd my life, inspire my song.
If she'll vouchsafe on me to shine,
Good night APOLLO and the Nine.





M. DE LA FONTAINE'S

A N S W E R

T O

M. DE ST. EVREMOND.

TH O all the Muses shou'd combine,
 And EVREMOND those sisters join;
 They cou'd not with their softest strains
 Or ease my grief, or charm my pains.
 A Rheumatism, the Devil's invention,
 Nurst up in hell with dire intention,
 Does jade my Body, cramp my Soul,
 And all its faculties controul.
 No intervals of pain I know,
 No flattering thoughts deceive my woe.
 Sleep I invoke with mournful cries,
 But sleep my wearied eye-lids flies.

Two Nymphs of different charms possess,
 With gay ideas fill your breast.
 HORTENSIA chiefly does infuse,
 New life and vigour in your Muse.
 Had Nature nothing for you done,
 HORTENSIA wou'd suffice alone.

While

While you the pleasing game pursue,
To Verses I must bid adieu,
Till the kind Spring, with cowslips crown'd,
Unthaws my fancy and the ground.

This it is, Sir, that has hinder'd me from returning you my thanks so soon as I ought to have done, for the honour you did me in writing to me. The less I deserv'd so obliging a Letter, the more sensible I ought to be of the favour. You commend me for my Poetry and my Morals, and that with so good a grace, that Morals greatly suffer by it, that is to say, Modesty.

Not India with its rich perfumes,
Its spicy stores, and boasted gums
That Priests in sacred temples use,
Equals the incense of your Muse.
Who, without pride and pleasure too,
Can hear the praise that comes from you,
To whom the ready world submit,
Standard of Authors, judge of Wit!
If any taste my genius shews,
To your nice rule that taste it owes.
I mean in part; for VOITURE's ease,
Did next instruct me how to please:
MAROT too, justly claims a share:
You three my honoured Masters are.

I forgot my Master FRANCIS, whose Disciple I still profess my self, as likewise Master VINCENT's and Master CLEMENT's[†]. I think here are Masters enough in all conscience for a Scholar of my

[†] Francis Rabelais, Vincent Voiture, and Clement Marot.

my age. As I have no extraordinary talent at Raillery, wherein you excel, I'll come and learn lessons of you on the banks of Hippocrene, (provided, Sir, we have plenty of bottles there a cooling). We will be furrounded with Nymphs, and the young Sons of Parnassus, who shall set down in their Table-books the least things you say. I see them from hence, learning in your school to judge of every thing with niceness and penetration.

The men of nicest taste, and justest wit,
To your tribunal readily submit;
But I'll your merits silently admire,
As you HORTENSIA's happy charms and fire.

At the very same place, where you tell me that you will pay a secret adoration to these three Powers, Madam MAZARIN, and the two Kings; you make me her Portraicture, by telling me 'tis impossible to do it, and by giving me leave to represent to my imagination all the Beauties and Graces I can think of. If I were so rash as to attempt it, you defy, in her name, both Truth and Fable, and all the most agreeable ideas we can form in our minds. I should make my court but ill to you, should I suffer my self to be beaten back and awed by such difficulties. We ought to represent your Heroine to you as well as we are able. This enterprize is somewhat too large for one of my narrow genius to undertake, and wou'd be much fitter for you than my self, whom the world has hitherto believed to be able to draw nothing but Animals². However, in order to please you, and to make this Portraicture come up to the life as near as I can, I have run
over

² *Monsieur de la Fontaine hath admirably well translated Esop's Fables into French Verse.*

over the Country of the Muses, but cou'd find nothing in effect, but old expressions among them, which you say the world despises. From thence I travell'd to the Land of the Graces, where I fell into the same inconvenience. Jest and smiles are a sort of Gallantry more threadbare than the other, and you are much better acquainted with them than I. Thus, the best I can do, is only to say, that in your Heroine nothing is wanting of that which pleases, and of that which pleases too much.

To bright HORTENSIA, Fate's indulgent care
Has given a free, but winning Air :

The force of Wit, and blooming Beauty's pride,
With thousand nameless Charms beside :

Where'er the busy sun enlightens day,
HORTENSIA'S eyes have sov'reign sway.

Oh EVREMOND ! chief leader of the train,
That fair HORTENSIA'S crown maintain,
In lasting Numbers, and harmonious Lays
Begin to celebrate her praise.

Why should I PHOEBUS, or the Muses name?
You'll do more justice to her fame.

What will you say now to a design that is just come into my head? Since you wish that the Glory of Madam MAZARIN fill'd all the universe, and I for my part desire that the Fame of Madam DE BOUILLON might yet go farther, let neither of us sleep till we have put so fine an enterprize in execution. Let us make our selves *Knights of the round Table* ; and it happens well enough that this sort of Chivalry began first in England. We will have two magnificent Tents erected at our own charges

ges, and above these two tents, the Portraictures of the two Divinities whom we adore.

At the foot of some bridge, or the side of a wood,
The Heralds shall publish this Challenge aloud:

*Great MARIANA and HORTENSIA see,
She without equal, without second she,
Born high above their sex, unrivall'd stand,
And all the hearts of all the world demand.*

If your opinion finds belief,
HORTENSIA will be reckon'd chief:
But MARIANA'll turn the scale,
If my small interest can prevail.
This is agreed on either hand,
One of the two must every heart command.

But what, if to prevent all jars,
And ill effects of civil wars,
We choose a mediator straight,
To reconcile this grand debate?
He that between two Kings did matters clear
Will sure be thought a proper umpire here³.

We will stay till the return of the Spring, and that of my Health; otherwise I shall be forc'd to seek out strange Adventures in a litter. People will call me *the Knight of the Rheumatism*; a name, which, as I take it, doth not so well suit with a Knight Errant. Heretofore, when all seasons of the year were alike to me, I wou'd have embark'd without any more ado. But now the case is alter'd:

CUPID

³ *The French Ambassador.*

CUPID, who as the story goes,
Once prick'd his fingers with a rose,
In a sad tone, and doleful strain,
Did of the puny smart complain.
How wou'd his little Godship swear,
Did he my murd'ring torments bear?
Ev'n Love, with all its boasted pain,
Is nothing to what I sustain.

We have suffer'd a mighty loss in the Death of Mr. WALLER: he should have made one of our company, had he been living. Perhaps I ought not to have introduced him into a Letter, so little serious as this is: however, I think my self obliged to give you an account of what has happen'd to him on the other side of the Lake of Oblivion. You will look upon this as a Dream, and perhaps 'tis no better: however, the whim is got into my head, and such as it is, I leave it with you.

Between the Wits, the Lovers, and the Wise,
A warm dispute did in Elysium rise.
Each side to WALLER did pretend,
Each side wou'd WALLER have their friend.

*You well-bred Shades, great PLUTO said,
I have your several reasons weigh'd:
Four talents did in WALLER shine,
Wisdom, and Eloquence divine,
And charming Verse, and Love's soft flame:
Which of you then does WALLER claim?*

Oh sovereign PLUTO, Minister of Fate,
This case admits of no debate.

If

If these four gifts did WALLER grace,
 Love ought to challenge the first place.
 For Love, when once it has inspir'd the breast,
 Is the great art that teaches all the rest.

To return now to what you tell me of my Morals, I am very glad that you have so good an opinion of 'em. I am no less an enemy than you to that false Wit upon which our Libertines value themselves. Whoever affects it, I shall make no scruple to yield him the better in ridicule.

Since my day's spent so near the night,
 Why should I beat my brains to write?
 'Tis better far with busy look
 To view the world's amazing book:
 And Nature's mystick springs to know,
 And the vast mind that all controuls below.

When this is done, what shou'd deny
 To take our fill of harmless joy?
 Joy we may taste a thousand ways,
 And still find something new to please.
 Whether by some cool river's side
 We see the wanton waters glide,
 The fishes sport, and sun-beams gay
 On the smooth liquid surface play.
 Or seek some lonely Sylvan shade,
 Or glimm'ring bower, or russet glade,
 Where the dark horrors of the wood
 Solemn thoughts inspire, and good.
 Sometimes at table when we dine,
 We may dissolve our cares in Wine,

And

And o'er the generous Nectar sport,
And laugh at City and at Court.
And sometimes too a new Amour,
May serve to pass an idle hour :
Long with the Fair we must not stay,
But from the charmer part away.
Love does unseen the flame impart,
And finds an easy passage to the heart.

But is't not, worthy friend, high time
To chase the C E L I A's from my rhyme,
When the grave City is preparing,
To give our Damsels Indian airing *?
Oh that that my persecuting pain,
Wou'd with these Lasses cross the main.

Cruel disease ! old Saturn's son,
Quit this abode, and get thee gone :
Some lazy Prelate's limbs invade,
Or Lawyer batt'ning on his trade.
Or with thy dire attendants wait,
On some dull Minister of State.
But why, thy visits never timing,
Should'st thou intrude to spoil my rhiming ?
The devil a Verse can from me creep,
But shews what company I keep.

If this be thy felonious aim,
To chill my Muse, and damp her flame,

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C c

Prithee

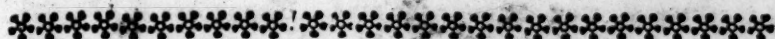
* At the time when Monsieur de la Fontaine writ this Letter, they took up, at Paris, as many Women of pleasure as they could find out, in order to send them to the French Colonies in the West-Indies.

Prithee to some new host repair,
 And all this needless trouble spare.
 In few months more, without thy aid,
 Old age will spoil me for that trade.

Madam DE LA SABLIERE thinks her self extremely honoured, that you have been pleas'd to remember her, and desires me to thank you for it. I hope that this will supply the place of a recommendation with you, and more readily obtain me the honour of your friendship. I request and beg you, Sir, to believe that no man in the world is more sincerely yours, than I, who am, Your, &c.

Paris, December
 18. 1687.





A

J U D G M E N T

ON THE THREE

ACCOUNTS OF SIAM,

AND ON

CONFUCIUS'S BOOK.

T O

M. L E F E V R E, M.D.

I Have carefully read the three *Accounts of Siam*, which you sent me; and my opinion of the Authors is as follows.

The Chevalier DE CHAUMONT¹ gives us but a lame account of the Nations he saw: for, being so taken up with his own Character, he could neither satisfy his own curiosity in travelling, nor answer our expectations at his return. But whoever aspires at the honour of an Embassy, cannot have a better master than him, for learning the state and
C c 2 nicety

¹ Relation de l'Ambassade de M. de Chaumont à la Cour du Roi de Siam, &c. printed in the year 1686.

nicety that are to be observ'd in the minutest circumstances.

Father TACHARD² has the accomplishments of a Missionary for all sorts of Religions ; is as capable of planting the faith of the Eastern people in Europe, as that of the Europeans in the East ; as fit to make Talapoins at Paris, as Jesuits at Siam.

The Abbé DE CHOISI³ tires me much with his Journal of Winds and Courses ; but the Letters wherein he speaks of himself divert me. I am overjoy'd to find him take Orders, that so he might be employ'd in saying of Mass ; he being otherwise unserviceable on shipboard. He writes naturally ; and to do him justice, no traveller is less fond of the *faux merveilleux*, or of pretended wonders, than he. He is not displeas'd to shew himself upon a great Elephant, or to appear before the King with the Ambassador and the Bishop, nor to confer with Mr. CONSTANCE in private : but yet for all that, he does not think the Symphony of that Country the less detestable ; nor is he a whit better pleas'd with the Chinese Comedy, or the Siamese Opera ; nor does he like their Painting better than their Musick. As to their refreshments and entertainments, they consist of Hens, Ducks, Hogs, and Rice without end ; a very afflicting thing to Monsieur the Abbé's Gout, notwithstanding the mortification to which his new state of life ties him down.

Tonquin and Cochinchina are but very inconsiderable : those Kingdoms stand in need to be embellish'd by imaginations that are in love with foreign wonders. I pass'd from those *Accounts* to CONFUCIUS'S

² Voyage de Siam des Peres Jesuites envoyez par le Roi aux Indes & à la Chine, &c. publish'd in 1686.

³ Journal du Voyage de Siam ; printed in 1686.

CIUS's Book ⁴, who is the most tiresome Moral-
list I ever read. His sentences are below PIR-
BRAC's *Quatrains*, where he is intelligible; and
above the *Apocalypse*, where he is obscure.



A

L E T T E R

T O

MONSIEUR JUSTEL.

ALtho you have made a resolution never to
buy any Books, yet I advise you to purchase
that of OROBIO a famous Jew, and Mr. LIM-
BORCH a learned Christian ¹. Nothing ever ap-
pear'd on that subject stronger, more ingenious, or
more profound. M. GAUMIN ² would have
said of LIMBORCH,

Si Pergama dextrâ

Defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent.

and I will say of OROBIO,

C c 3

Si

⁴ Confucius Sinarum Philosophus, sive scientia Sinica exposita,
etc. publish'd by Father Compter in 1687.

¹ The title of this Book is, De Veritate Christianæ Religionis
amica collatio cum erudito Judæo. See the Bibliothéque Univer-
selle, Tom. VII. pag. 289.

² See my Remarks on the Colomesiana.

Si Pergama dextrâ

Everti possent, etiam hac eversa fuissent.

You will quickly see the Relation of Father MAGAILLANS, which is impatiently expected by the lovers of foreign wonders. Those Gentlemen who did not find their account in the plain and rational truths of Father COUPLET, will have amends made 'em in the exaggerations of this Portugeze, who is fonder of strange things, than rigorously ty'd down to real truth. They will find in this curious Book the Twelve Excellencies of China, in imitation of the Twelve Excellencies of Portugal, which the Author thought fit to present the Chinese with ³.

What sort of Country is that China, according to the account I have had from the sincere and judicious Father COUPLET ⁴! No Corn at Pekin, no Wine in the whole Empire, no Oil of Olives, no Butter, no Oysters! There you see Painting without shade, Musick without parts, wooden Palaces without architecture; many Sciences lost, as they pretend; ignorance of almost every thing, as we perceive; an Alphabet of sixty thousand letters, and a Language consisting of nothing but monosyllables. There would have been no Geometry, no Astronomy there, if zeal for conversions had not prompted the Jesuits to go thither; who owe the toleration of our Religion, next to the grace of God, to the Calendar and Almanacks. You see there are a great many things wanting to that renowned Coun-

³ *Father Magaillans, a Portugeze Jesuit, who died in China in 1677, left a Manuscript, entituled, The Twelve Excellencies of China, which has been translated out of Portugeze into French, and publish'd at Paris in 1688, with this title: Nouvelle Relation de la Chine, contenant la Description des particularitez les plus considerables de ce grand Empire.*

⁴ *M. de St. Evremond had seen Father Couplet in England.*

Country ; but as a recompence for this, their Morals are good, their Policy excellent, the People innumerable, the Subjects obedient, and the greatest of Emperors moderate.



A

L E T T E R

T O

M. DE LA BASTIDE.

*Nequicquam Deus abscidit
Prudens Oceano dissociabili
Terras; si tamen impie
Non tangenda rates transiliunt vada¹.*

IT is not possible, Sir, to state the Question better than you have done ; but I am of opinion that you decide it rather with an eye to the genius of HORACE, than according to the true notions which may be form'd of the matter in hand. Do you believe that if MALHERBE had wish'd any of his friends a happy passage from Caen to London, he would have had any other object in view than the sea which divides France from England ? He might have enlarg'd poetically upon storms, shallows, and sand-banks ; and especially upon shelves

C c 4

¹ Horat. Odar. Lib. I. Od. 3.

shelves and rocks ; but still with a view to the passage which his friend had to make.

The modern Genius, which a nature less exalted hath left in a dependance upon order and reason ; this Genius, I say, would never have had the boldness to raise it self at one dash, to the Creation of the world, and the separation of the Land from the water. And indeed, there is no necessity of going to the Indies to be drowned ; and sixty leagues of sea would have been sufficient to awaken MALHERBE against the inventor of Navigation.

I talk to you, like a man who has only low and common views : but as for you, Sir, who are perfectly well acquainted with HORACE² ; you may believe that his enthusiasms gave him a right to quit *the half of his soul*³ so suddenly, and to pass from the tenderness of his Love to the miracle of a second *Genesis*. But to speak seriously, if any thing makes me allow of your opinion, it is, that he who ascends to the *war of the Giants*, has but a step farther to go, before he arrives at the *Creation of the World*.

All things considered, I am mistaken if both opinions may not be defended : that of Monsieur BARILLON, which is the more natural of the two, flows from good sense, which judges of things as they are in themselves ; and yours perhaps agrees well enough to HORACE's taste, who is apt enough to go from his subject. The beauty of his genius gives him a privilege of advancing happy boldnesses, and noble extravagancies, which our imagination, straitened by a scruple of justness, will not allow. But whatever meaning we are pleased to put upon HORACE's words, his *Ode* is

² Monsieur de la Bastide had translated into French some Odes of Horace, and among the rest, that which is here mention'd.

³ Horace calls Virgil, *animæ dimidium meæ*.

is equally beautiful and extraordinary : I am of opinion, that no Poet ever had so tender a heart, and so free a mind at the same time.



A

L E T T E R
TO MONSIEUR * * *.

In the name of the Dutcheſs of
MAZARIN.

I Am not conſiderable enough in the world, to think I am obliged to give it an account of my Affairs ; but I am grateful enough for the part you take in my concerns, to ſatisfy your curioſity as to my preſent Circumſtances. All that I fear, is, leſt the length of my Letter may give you too much trouble ; for I cannot pretend to give you an account of my preſent, without reminding you of my paſt condition in many inſtances. I ſhall, out of modeſty, forbear to ſay any thing of the advantages which I had ; and ſhall, out of diſcretion, abſtain from mentioning the qualities of Monſieur MAZARIN : but leaving the publick to make a judgment of our perſons, I ſhall be bold to ſay, that I did not in the leaſt contribute towards the ſquandering away of the Eſtate I brought him ; and that the loweſt of his domeſticks enrich'd themſelves

selves out of it, at the same time that he denied me the mere necessities of life.

I liv'd more than I ought to have done, and as long as I could, with a Husband that was so contrary to my temper; at last I disengag'd my self out of Reason, from a man with whom I suffer'd my self to be joined out of Obedience. So just a disengagement cost me those riches which have made so much noise in the world: but liberty can never be too dear bought, by one who delivers himself from tyranny. However that be, I found my self divested of every thing: I found my self without any means of subsisting, till such time as the King, out of a principle of justice, was pleas'd to give me a Pension, without Monsieur MAZARIN's consent, which Monsieur MAZARIN took from me ten years ago, with his Majesty's consent. This change of the King's favour, must not be imputed to the change of my conduct; for I never was guilty of any thing that could displease him. But it is hard for the greatest of Kings to distinguish well betwixt the imposture of bad offices, and those truths which they have need to be inform'd of. Reason would do too much violence to our inclination and humour, if we were always to distrust those whom we love, or who please us; and naturally we don't lay our selves under the restraint of those precautions against agreeable persons, for the sake of indifferent persons, whom we don't converse withal. For this reason, I am not surprized that I have been believed to be such an one as I have been painted: the King would have done me the justice to augment the Pension that has been taken from me, if I had been so happy as to have been known to him such as I really am.

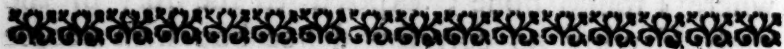
In the mean while, notwithstanding this retrenchment, and the Debts which have followed upon it, I have continu'd to live honourably by the favours
and

and benefits of the Kings of England : but on this extraordinary Revolution, which will be the wonder of all ages, I found my self forsaken ; reduc'd to the necessity of seeking help only from my self, where I found none ; expos'd to the fury of the mob ; having no correspondence but with people who were as much amazed as my self, and endeavour'd to hearten one another ; or with unfortunate people, who were fitter to mourn together, than to comfort one another. After so many troubles, Tranquillity was again restor'd ; but the ceasing of the troubles set my mind more at ease, only the better to shew me the sad state of my Affairs. I have now nothing of my own, no assistance where I am, no hopes of any elsewhere ; receiving nothing but Compliments instead of Assistance from the few friends I have with you, and reproaches from all others, for having liv'd in a place, from whence I do not know how to depart, and finding my self yet more at a loss where I can go.

Till now, faults have been condemned, and misfortunes lamented : but I make all things change their nature, misery, that melancholy work of my fortune brings me enemies, excites the bitterness and wrath of those who ought to be most favourable to me. I don't exaggerate the unhappiness of my condition, which I am the more sensible of, because I meet with Reproaches, when I expected Consolations. You have more reason, Sir, than to approve so unjust a behaviour ; and you have constancy enough in friendship, still to continue yours towards me. If it cannot succour me as much as you could wish, yet it is as sincere as I could desire it to be. My stars beget good-will towards me, where there is no power, and opposition where there is : but, in fine, the malignity of the influence is not compleat, since amidst all the misfor-

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misfortunes it causes, it still leaves me some Friends, who use their utmost endeavours to give me consolation.



A

L E T T E R

TO MONSIEUR ***.

In the name of the Dutcheſs of
MAZARIN.

I Don't wonder that Monsieur MAZARIN gives out that I only was to blame for my not returning to France; but I should wonder very much if people of sense should suffer themselves to be cheated with his artifices, and could be won over by his lyes. As we never agreed in any one thing, so I shall take a course quite contrary to his, by telling nothing but truth. 'Tis ten years since Monsieur MAZARIN took from me a Pension of twenty four thousand Livres, which were given me for my subsistence: this retrenchment brought on me considerable debts, which hinder'd my departure out of England, where I was teaz'd by my Creditors, but not persecuted to that degree I have been since.

All things are changed. The Revolution has happened; I found my self without relief, without any means of paying my old debts, and very happy to be

be able to contract new ones for my subsistence. Not a day went over my head, but I was threatned to be thrown in prison: I was not safe even in privileg'd places; and when I went from my Lodgings, I was not sure of returning to them. Being reduc'd to this hard necessity, some of my Friends, and even some Merchants, oblig'd themselves for part of my debts to those tyrants, and were soon forc'd to pay them. But by this means I only chang'd my Creditors; for these new ones take as great precaution how to be paid, as others would have done. However, I am oblig'd to them for the small liberty I enjoy; and for the subsistence which I have hitherto found, which I find every day more hard to get.

This is the true state of my past Circumstances, and the real condition of my present; certainly it cannot be worse. I deserve to be assisted by my friends, and pitied by indifferent persons. A fuller detail of my Affairs, would be troublesome to others, and useles to my self; and therefore I shall say no more.





A

L E T T E R
TO MONSIEUR ***.

In the name of the Dutcheſs of
MAZARIN.

NO body can have a deeper ſenſe than I have of the declaration of your Friendſhip to me; but allow me, Sir, to complain of the injuſtice of thoſe conjectures which are made of my intention. If I had been in a condition to depart, and yet had ſtaid after this, ſomething might have been objected; but People will needs have me to return to France, and yet leave me at an impoſſibility of going out of England. There is not a greater truth in the whole world than what I tell you. I have wrote a Letter to the Dutcheſs of NEVERS, which is ſomewhat longer than this, wherein I declar'd my mind more at large. I beg of you, Sir, to believe me truly ſincere, particularly when I proteſt that I ſhall maintain my friendſhip for you all the days of my life.



A



A

L E T T E R

T O T H E

DUTCHESS OF NEVERS.

In the name of the Dutchess of
MAZARIN.

I Never doubted, Madam, of your having all the concern that any one could have for my interests : I expected from your friendship all that you could expect from mine. It is not necessary to give one another new assurances thereof in our Letters, since we can firmly depend upon one another in every thing that regards us. I thought that nothing in Monsieur MAZARIN's conduct ought to surprize me ; and yet I cannot help wondering, that after having taken my Pension from me, for these ten or twelve years ; reduc'd me to the necessity of begging my subsistence, as I do ; endeavoured to deprive me of my Rights, not satisfied to see me in want during his life, unless he could be sure I should be miserable after his death : after so handsome a proceeding, so obliging a conduct, and so generous actions, I cannot but wonder, I say, that he should be so kind as to desire I should come and live with him. But first of all, my Debts must be paid, my subsistence secured, and I set at liberty to go out of England. This I expect from
 2 the

the justice of the Gentlemen of the Great Council ; and from yours, Madam, that you will believe me to be, as I really am, &c.



A

L E T T E R

TO MONSIEUR * * *

In the name of the Dutcheſs of
MAZARIN.

I Always believed that which you were ſo kind as to write to me about my Affairs, and am overjoy'd that my ſentiments agree with yours. Monſieur MAZARIN did never ſincerely intend to ſee me again. He had a mind, as you ſay very well, to deprive me of my Rights, and after having made me unhappy during his life, like a good Chriſtian, to put it out of all doubt, that I ſhould be miſerable after his death. This, Sir, is the holy joy which he intended to give me. I conjure you to continue your cares and aſſiſtance towards me, in the courſe of an Affair, which, in all likelihood, will not have a ſpeedy iſſue. In ſpite of Monſieur MAZARIN's application, who expects the ſucceſs of his perſecutions not ſo much from Providence as from his own induſtry, I don't believe the Gentlemen of the Great Council will deprive me of my Rights ; but if Monſieur MAZARIN

RIN

RIN is not obliged to pay my Debts, how shall I come off with my Creditors, and whence can I expect the means of subsisting, till such time as they are satisfied? The Merchants have given me credit, and people of Condition have obliged me with money; but they will not lose their money. What shall I do? I do what Monsieur MAZARIN says, but practises not; and that is, commit my self entirely to Providence. To this I shall add the care and concern of my Relations and Friends, and particularly yours, Sir, which lay an obligation upon me which I shall never forget.



A

JUDGMENT

UPON SOME

FRENCH AUTHORS.

To the Dutcheſs of MAZARIN.

ACcording to your deſire, Madam, I here offer you my thoughts on ſome of our Authors.

MALHERBE has always been reckoned the moſt excellent of our Poets; but more for his turn and expreſſion, than for his invention and thoughts.

We cannot deny VOITURE the firſt rank in every thing relating to Ingenuity and Gallantry: 'tis enough for SARRASIN to have the ſecond

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D d

place,

place, to be on a level with the most esteemed of the Antients in that kind.

BENSERADE has so particular a character, and so agreeable a manner of saying things, that the nicest Criticks can bear with his Points and Allusions.

In Tragedy, CORNEILLE admits of no equal, RACINE of no superior; the diversity of Characters allowing a concurrence, if it cannot establish an equality. CORNEILLE is admired for the expression of an heroick Grandeur of Soul, for the force of the Passions, and sublimity of Discourse: RACINE's merit consists in Sentiments which are more natural, in Thoughts that are more clear, and in a Diction that is more pure, and more easy. The former ravishes the soul, the latter makes a conquest of the mind: the latter gives no room for the reader to censure, the former does not leave the spectator in a condition to examine. In the conduct of the Work, RACINE more circumspect, or distrusting himself, sticks close to the Greeks, whom he is a perfect master of; CORNEILLE, improving the advantages which time affords, finds out beauties which ARISTOTLE knew nothing of.

MOLIERE has taken the Antients for his model; and would be inimitable to those whom he imitates, if they were yet alive.

There is no Author who has done greater honour to our age than DESPREAUX; to make a larger panegyrick upon him, would be to assume the province of his Works, which make it themselves.

LA FONTAINE embellishes the *Fables* of the Antients: the Antients would have spoiled LA FONTAINE'S *Tales*.

PERRAULT has found out the defects of the Antients, better than he has made out the advantage of the Moderns. To take it altogether, his
Book

Book ¹ seems to me to be very good, curious, useful, and capable of curing us of abundance of errors. I could wish the *Chevalier* had told fewer stories, that the *President* had enlarg'd his reasons a little more, and the *Abbé* confin'd his within a narrower compass.

You would have me speak of my self, Madam; but I shall speak to you of your self. If any of those Gentlemen had been in my place, had the benefit of seeing you every day, and receiving the bright hints which you inspire, he had surpass'd both the Antients and Moderns. But I have improv'd this advantage so little, that I don't deserve a place amongst those illustrious persons.



A

LETTER

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

I Hope you will be so good as to excuse me, Madam, if I do not perfectly give into the generous frankness of your sentiments, which is opposite to the natural circumspection of my Countrymen, who are enemies to truths that are clear, and boldly declar'd. My Reasons against a full declaration of your intentions, are these:

D d 2

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* Parallele des Anciens & des Modernes.

I am persuaded that all your Acquaintance (for your Friends have not yet shewn themselves) desire nothing more than to have a pretence to cry out against your humour and your conduct, tho the one be very agreeable, and the other very blameless. Never give them any handle to wreak themselves upon you : tie them down, whether they will or no, at least to a decent shew of Friendship which they ought to have for you, with more warmth than they have. Always ask money ; and if none comes, 'tis you who will have cause to complain : if you can get it, I engage to furnish you with ten or twelve Reasons for not leaving England, each of which will be better than another. In fine, give no body any cause or pretext of abandoning you, and be convinced that a too open declaration of your intentions would be very prejudicial to you there, and would not be of any use to you here. I have heard you say, Madam, that the Countess of SOISSONS never gave people any opportunity of finding out her secrets : don't discover your sentiments your self. If you are resolved to proceed with less precaution, the *Normand* quits his, and is ready to enter into your sentiments.





A

L E T T E R

FROM

MADAM DE L'ENCLOS,

TO

M. DE ST. EVREMOND.

Monsieur DE CHARLEVAL is just dead¹; at which I am so much afflicted, that I endeavour to comfort my self by considering the share you will have in my grief. I visited him every day. His mind had all the charms of youth, and his heart had all the goodness and tenderness that could be desired in a true Friend. We often spoke of you, and of all the original wits of our time. His life, and that which I lead at present, had a great deal of resemblance. In fine, such a loss is worse than death it self. Pray let me hear from you. I am as much concerned about your welfare at London, as if you were here: old friends have charms, which are never so well known as when we are depriv'd of them.

D d 3

A

¹ Monsieur de Charleval died on the eighth day of March 1693, in the seventy third year of his age.



A

L E T T E R

From the same:

T O

M. DE ST. EVREMOND.

I Was all alone in my Chamber, and very weary with reading, when one came and told me, *There is a Gentleman who comes from Monsieur DE ST. EVREMOND.* Judge you if all my weariness was not shaken off that moment. I had the pleasure of talking of you, and was thereby informed of particulars which Letters cannot express, *viz.* your perfect health, and your occupations. The joy of the mind shews the force of it; and your Letters persuade me, that England promises you forty years more of life: for I think that it is in England only that they talk of People who have liv'd beyond the age of man. I could have wish'd to have pass'd the remainder of my life with you; had you thought the same way that I do, you would be in this Country now. However, it is very agreeable to remember those persons whom we have loved; and perhaps this separation of our bodies, has been made on purpose to embellish my Epitaph. I could have wish'd the young
Divine

Divine ¹ had found me in the glory of *Niquée* ², where people never suffer any change; for I believe you think me one of the first persons enchanted in it. Don't change your ideas in this matter, which have always been favourable to me; and let this communication, which some Philosophers think better than presence, endure always.

I told Monsieur TURRETIN how glad I should be if I could do him any service: he has met with some of my friends here, who have thought him worthy of the praises you have given him. If he has a mind to converse with the honest Abbots, who remain here in the absence of the Court, he shall be treated as a man whom you esteem. I read your Letter before him with Spectacles; but they do not ill become me for I had always a grave mein. If he is in love with that *Merit*, which is call'd here *distinguished*, perhaps your wish may be accomplished; for people endeavour to comfort me every day for my losses, by this fine word. I understood that you wish'd LA FONTAINE in England: we have but little of his company at Paris; his head is very much weakened. This is the fate of Poets: TASSO and LUCRETIVS felt it. I doubt no Love-powder has been laid for LA FONTAINE; for he did not much court Women who could be at the expence of it.

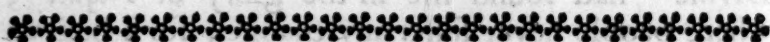
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M.

¹ Monsieur Alphonse Turretin, now Professor of Divinity and Ecclesiastical History in the Academy of Geneva.

² See the Romance of Amadis de Gaule.





M. DE ST. EVREMOND'S

A N S W E R

T O

MADAM DE L'ENCLOS.

Monsieur TURRETIN is extremely obliged to me for making him acquainted with you ; and I am not a little obliged to him for giving occasion to the fine Letter which I have just received. I don't question but he found you with the same eyes that I beheld you formerly : those eyes by which I always new the Conquest of a Lover, when they sparkl'd a little more than ordinary, and which made us say,

CY THEREA *ne'er was such*, &c¹.

You are still the same to me ; and tho nature, which never spar'd any body, should have spent its utmost power to produce some alteration in the features of your face, yet my imagination will still be for you, that *Glory* of *Niquée*, in which you know people underwent no change. I am very sure, that as to your eyes and your teeth, you have no occasion for it : what you stand most in need of, is my judgment, to understand thorowly the advantages of your wit, which improves every day. You are more witty than ever the young and sprightly NINON² was.

A

¹ *An Ode of Malherbe.*

² *See pag. 431.*



A

BILLET

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

I Beg of you Madam, to tell the Dutchess of BOUILLON that no person can be more sensible than I am of the honour that she does me by remembring me. I don't much pity LA FONTAINE's condition, fearing lest my own may stand in need of pity. At his and my age, no body ought to wonder that we lose our Reason, but that we keep it. The preservation of it is no great advantage: 'tis an obstacle to the quiet of old people; and a bar to the pleasures of young persons. LA FONTAINE feels not that disorder which it gives, and perhaps he is the happier on that score. It is not a misfortune to be a foolish, but to have so little time to be so¹.

A

¹ Monsieur de La Fontaine died the 13th of March, 1695.



A

L E T T E R

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF BOUILLON,

*In the name of the Dutcheſs of MA-
ZARIN.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

I think I have explain'd my ſelf ſo often and ſo clearly, on the demand that has been made me to declare my Intentions, that there was no occaſion of requiring a new declaration. I proteſt to you then, my dear Siſter, that I have no deſign to eternize my ſelf in England; all my aim and wiſh is, to return to France to my family: but I declare to you, with the utmoſt ſincerity, that it were as impoſſible for me to depart hence without paying my Debts, as to fly. I am every day forced to contract new debts, when I expected to receive wherewithal to pay off my old ones. There are perhaps one or two perſons of quality among my Creditors, who would not hinder my departure; but the reſt would no more ſuffer my Bankruptcy than the Merchants. You may be ſure that I am more deſirous of being at liberty, than others can be grieved to ſee me in a kind of captivity in foreign Countries. Nothing but the want of means hinders me from going to ſpend the reſt
of

of my days with those persons whom I love above all the rest of the world. You are convinced, my dear Sister, that my Brother and your self are the chief of them. These are my true and real Intentions : I don't disguise them in the least. 'Tis very true, I would rather chuse Death, than return to Monsieur MAZARIN; and would as soon pass the rest of my life in a Nunnery as with him : in effect, these are two extremes which are both equally to be avoided. You will make such use of my Letter as you shall think will be most for my advantage. Adieu, my dear Sister; love me always, and continue your endeavours to serve that person in the world, who is most yours.



A

B I L L E T

T O T H E

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

IF you have a mind to understand how necessary you are to the World, you may satisfy your curiosity in your short absence. There is a Spanish *Concetto* which I would apply to you, if I was not too much an enemy to a figurative Style. *When the Sun is under an eclipse*, says the Author of the *Concetto*, 'tis to let the World know how difficult it is to be without its light. Your eclipse makes my Lords MONTAGUE, GODOLPHIN, ARRAN, and others, feel how hard it is to live without your light. I defy all the Spaniards and Italians together,

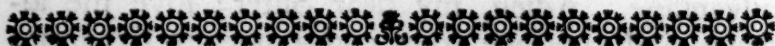
to

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to carry a Figure farther. Every thing lowres at London since your departure. It is not so at Chelsea, where your Philosophy makes you taste a very delicious Retreat. Manage the grief of your friends by intervals of presence :

Upon the wings of time grief flies away.

Show your self from time to time, or at least let your friends see you at Chelsea. *Tu y o hasta la muerte.*



A

L E T T E R

To the same.

NO Letter had ever given me more pleasure than yours, Madam, provided it had been written to any other but my self. The thoughts in it are lively, and the applications happy: to my misfortune, all that wit is exercis'd at my expence. My *most humble and most obedient Servant*, shows an ingenious displeasure, which puts your most humble and most obedient Servant in despair. I could have bore up under a sudden and impetuous anger: my patience has often been tried with those kind of movements; but an ingenious and meditated anger quite confounds me, and puts me to fruitless pain to guess the cause of it. I examine my self, and the more I study to discover my fault, the more reasons do I find to hope for your good graces. If PARMENIO is guilty of a slip, who can be trusted? If he be innocent, what can we do,
what

what behaviour can shelter us? I will answer for it, Madam, PARMENIO is not faulty in the least.

From PARMENIO one easily passes to the Generals: I do not blame those who are alive; but I have hitherto praised none but the dead, and it already appears, that they were praise-worthy. The taking of Namur¹ would have excited me to some fine production; but ever since my Star has hid her self, and I have been without her influences, my Talents are buried. Here is abundance of idle discourse. If I yet saw one of your Letters signed DULCINEA, and I was allowed to sign mine as formerly, *El Cavallero de la triste figura*; what joy should I be in!

Hasta la muerte cannot be forbid me; for it depends upon me to be always, as I shall certainly be, either the *Knight with the dismal countenance*, or *Your most humble and most obedient Servant*.



T O T H E S A M E.

THE fine air of Chelsea, and the repose of solitude, leave no room to doubt, either of your health, or of the Tranquillity of your mind. This is the beginning of a Philosopher's Letter, written to a greater Philosopher than himself. He cannot maintain his Philosophy any longer: the remembrance of your displeasure against him has confounded him. He hopes nevertheless, that his innocence and your equity, will allow him to end with TUYO HASTA LA MUERTE, *El Cavallero de la triste figura*.

I

¹ Namur was taken by King William, on the 23d day of August 1695.

I was told of a Sparrow, the King of all Sparrows: they say it whistles, is tamer than any that ever was seen, and that it plays a thousand pretty tricks, which Sparrows are not wont to do. This great merit gave me a curiosity to see it. I found in it all that had been said of it, except that rare quality of whistling, which was put off to another time, when it would be in better humour. The lowest farthing was eight shillings: too little for a Nightingale-Sparrow; too much for a common Sparrow, let it be ever so tame.



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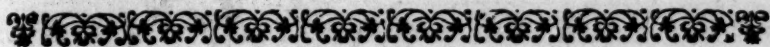
F R A G M E N T

UPON THE

*Discovery of a Conspiracy against the
King in 1696.*

IN order to understand well the importance of the King's Life, we must consider, that Spain founded on him the first hopes of deliverance from her misfortunes; that the States gave him the power he has in Holland for having sav'd them; that the Confederates have set him up as an Umpire in the Confederacy from the need they had of his Forces, and the confidence they plac'd in his Virtue. They saw a Prince always disposed to undertake, always ready to execute; capable of succeeding in the greatest designs by his conduct, of overcoming the greatest difficulties by his vigour; as moderate in prosperity, as firm and constant in disgraces; lov'd and esteem'd in his own Army, esteem'd and fear'd
in

in that of the enemy; more affected with Glory, than with his own particular Interest; more touch'd with the Interest of the publick, than with Glory.



A

L E T T E R

T O

MADAM DE L'ENCLOS.

I Have received the second Letter which you writ me, which is obliging, agreeable, and witty, and in which I find the humour of NINON¹, and the good sense of *Madam* DE L'ENCLOS. I knew how the former lived, and I learn from you, after what manner the other lives. Every thing contributes to make me regret the happy time which I have spent in your company, and to desire in vain to see you once more. I have not strength enough to transport my self over to France, and you have allurements there, which will hinder you from coming to England. The Dutcheſs of B O U I L L O N can tell you that England has its charms, and I should be ungrateful my self, if I did not own that I have met with pleasures and comforts in it. I am not a little pleased to hear that the Count DE GRAMMONT has recover'd his former health, and acquired a new Devotion. Hitherto I have been contented with being a good plain honest man; but I must do something more, and I only wait for your example to become godly. You live in a Country where people have wonderful advantages of

¹ *Madam de L'Enclos's christen'd Name, by which she went when she was young.*

of saving their Souls. There vice is almost as much against the fashion, as against virtue: sinning passes for ill-breeding, and shocks decency and good manners as much as Religion. Formerly it was enough to be wicked, but now one must be withal a scoundrel, to be damn'd in France. They who have not regard enough for another life, are led to salvation by the considerations and duties of this. But there is enough upon a subject, in which the Conversion of the Count DE GRAMMONT has engag'd me: I believe it to be sincere and honest. It well becomes a man who is not young, to forget that he has been so. This is what I could never yet arrive to; on the contrary, from the remembrance of my younger years, and the memory of my past vivacity, I endeavour to animate and enliven the sluggishness of my old age. What I find the most troublesome at this Age, is, that hope is lost; hope, which is the sweetest of all the passions, and that which contributes most to make us pass our time agreeably. That which gives me the greatest pain, is my despairing ever to see you: I must sit down satisfied with writing to you sometimes, in order to keep up a Friendship, which has resisted the length of time, the distance of place, and the usual coldness of old Age. This last word regards me; nature will begin with you, to show, that it is possible not to grow old. Pray let the Duke of LAUZUN know that I am his most humble Servant; and enquire whether Madam the Marechale DE CREQUI has paid him the five hundred Crowns that he lent me; I have been told by Letter a long time ago that she has, but I am not very sure of it.

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The End of the Second Volume.